VOLUME 152 MARCH 1926

Harpers Magazine

WHY SHOULD THE MAJORITY RULE?

BY WALTER LIPPMANN

Should the doctrine of the divine right of the majority go into the discard along with that of the divine right of kings? Is the rule of the majority more than a pacific substitute for civil war? What reason is there for thinking that wisdom rests with the vote of fifty-one per cent of the public rather than that of forty-nine per cent?

The principle of majority rule—the fundamental principle of democratic government—is seldom questioned save by those who have little sympathy or respect for the common man. But in the following article its universal applicability is challenged by a liberal, an enemy of tyranny and privilege, an astute political philosopher.—*The Editors.*

DURING the Dayton trial there was much discussion about what had happened to Mr. Bryan. How had a progressive democrat become so illiberal? How did it happen that the leader of the hosts of progress in 1896 was the leader of the hosts of darkness in 1925?

It was said that he had grown old. It was said that he was running for President. It was said that he had the ambition to lead an uprising of fundamentalists and prohibitionists. It was said that he was a beaten orator who had found his last applauding audience in the backwoods. And it was said that he had undergone a passionate religious conversion.

No matter whether the comment was charitable or malicious, it was always an explanation. There was always the assumption that Mr. Bryan had changed and, that in changing, he had departed from the cardinal tenets of his political faith. Mr. Bryan vehemently denied this and, on reflection, I am now inclined to think he was right. We were too hasty. Mr. Bryan's career was more logical and of a piece than it looked. There was no such contradiction, as most of us assumed, in the spectacle of the Great Commoner fighting for the legal suppression of scientific teaching.

He argued that a majority of the votors in Tennessee had the right to decide what should be taught in their schools. He had always argued that a majority had the right to decide. He had insisted on their right to decide on war and peace, on their right to regulate

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morals, on their right to make and unmake laws and lawmakers and executives and judges. He had fought to extend the suffrage so that the largest possible majority might help to decide; he had fought for the direct election of senators, for the initiative and referendum and direct primary, and for every other device which would permit the people to rule. He had always insisted that the people should rule. And he had never qualified this faith by saying what they should rule and how. It was no great transformation of thought, and certainly it was not for him an abandonment of principle to say that, if a majority in Tennessee was fundamentalist, then the public schools in Tennessee should be conducted on fundamentalist principles.

To question this right of the majority would have seemed to him as heretical as to question the fundamentalist creed. Mr. Bryan was as true to his political as he was to his religious faith. He had always believed in the sanctity of the text of the Bible. He had always believed that a majority of the people should rule. Here in Tennessee was a majority which believed in the sanctity of the text. To lead this majority was the logical climax of his career, and he died fighting for a cause in which the two great dogmas of his life were both at stake.

Given his two premises, I do not see how it is possible to escape his conclusions. If every word of the first chapter of Genesis is directly inspired by an omniscient and omnipotent God, then there is no honest way of accepting what scientists teach about the origin of man. And if the doctrine of majority rule is based on the eternal and inherent rights of man, then it is the only true basis of government, and there can be no fair objections to the moral basis of a law made by a fundamentalist majority in Tennessee. It is no answer to Mr. Bryan to say that the law is absurd, obscurantist, and reactionary. It follows from his premises, and it can be attacked radically only by attacking his premises.

This first premise: that the text of the Bible was written, as John Donne put it, by the Secretaries of the Holy Ghost, I shall not attempt to discuss here. There exists a vast literature of criticism. I am interested in his second premise: that the majority is of right sovereign in all things. And here the position is quite different. There is a literature of dissent and of satire and denunciation. But there exists no carefully worked-out higher criticism of a dogma which, in theory at least, constitutes the fundamental principle of nearly every government in the western world. On the contrary, the main effort of political thinkers during the last few generations has been devoted to vindicating the rights of masses of men against the vested rights of clerics and kings and nobles and men of property. There has been a running counter attack from those who distrusted the people, or had some interest in opposing their enfranchisement, but I do not know of any serious attempt to reach a clear understanding of where and when the majority principle applies.

Mr. Bryan applied it absolutely at Dayton, and thereby did a service to democratic thinking. For he reduced to absurdity a dogma which had been held carelessly but almost universally, and thus demonstrated that it was time to reconsider the premises of the democratic faith. Those who believed in democracy have always assumed that the majority should rule. They have assumed that, even if the majority is not wise, it is on the road to wisdom, and that with sufficient education the people would learn how to rule. But in Tennessee the people used their power to prevent their own children from learning, not merely the doctrine of evolution, but the spirit and method by which learning is possible. They had used their right to rule in order to weaken the agency which they had set up in order that they might learn how

to rule. They had founded popular government on the faith in popular education, and then they had used the prerogatives of democracy to destroy the hopes of democracy.

After this demonstration in Tennessee it was no longer possible to doubt that the dogma of majority rule contains within it some sort of deep and destructive confusion.

II

In exploring this dogma it will be best to begin at the very beginning with the primitive intuition from which the whole democratic view of life is derived. It is a feeling of ultimate equality and fellowship with all other creatures.

There is no wordly sense in this feeling, for it is reasoned from the heart: "there you are, sir, and there is your neighbor. You are better born than he, you are richer, you are stronger, you are handsomer, nay, you are better, wiser, kinder, more likable; you have given more to your fellowmen and taken less than he. By any and every test of intelligence, of virtue, of usefulness, you are demonstrably a better man than he, and yet—absurd as it sounds—these differences do not matter, for the last part of him is untouchable and incomparable and unique and universal." Either you feel this or you do not; when you do not feel it the superiorities that the world acknowledges seem like mountainous waves at sea; when you do feel it they are slight and impermanent ripples upon a vast ocean. Men were possessed by this feeling long before they had imagined the possibility of democratic government. They spoke of it in many ways but the essential quality of feeling is the same from Buddha to St. Francis to Whitman.

There is no way of proving the doctrine that all souls are precious in the eyes of God, or, as Dean Inge recently put it, that "the personality of every man and woman is sacred and inviolable." The doctrine proceeds from a mystical intuition. There is felt to be a spiritual reality behind and independent of the visible character and behavior of a man. We have no scientific evidence that this reality exists, and in the nature of things we can have none. But we know each of us, in a way too certain for doubting that, after all the weighing and comparing and judging of us is done, there is something left over which is the heart of the matter. Hence our conviction when we ourselves are judged that mercy is more just than justice. When we know the facts as we can know only the facts about ourselves, there is something too coarse in all the concepts of the intelligence and something too rough in all the standards of morality. The judgments of men fall upon behavior. They may be necessary judgments, but we do not believe they are final. There is something else, which is inadmissable, perhaps, as evidence in this world, which would weigh mightily before divine justice.

Each of us knows that of himself, and some attribute the same reserved value to others. Some natures with a genius for sympathy extend it to everyone they know and can imagine; others can barely project it to their wives and children. But even though few really have this sympathy with all men, there is enough of it abroad, reinforced perhaps with each man's dread of his fate in the unknown, to establish the doctrine rather generally. So we execute the murderer, but out of respect for an inviolable part of him we allow him the consolation of a priest and we bury him respectfully when he is dead. For we believe that, however terrible was his conduct, there is in him, nevertheless, though no human mind can detect it, a final quality which makes him part of our own destiny in the universe.

I can think of no inherent reason why men should entertain this mystical respect for other men. But it is easy to show how much that we find best in the world would be lost if the sense of equal-

ity and fellowship were lost. If we judged and were judged by our visible behavior alone, the inner defenses of civility and friendship and enduring love would be reached. Outward conduct is not good enough to endure a cold and steady analysis. Only an animal affection become habitual and reflected in mystical respect can blind people sufficiently to our faults. They would not like us enough to pardon us if all they had to go on was a strict behaviorist account of our conduct. They must reach deeper, blindly and confidently, to something which they know is likable although they do not know why. Otherwise the inequalities of men would be intolerable. The strong, the clever, the beautiful, the competent, and the good would make life miserable for their neighbors. They would be unbearable with their superiorities, and they would find unbearable the sense of inferiority they implanted in others. There would be no term upon the arrogance of the successful and the envy of the defeated. For without the mystic sense of equality the obvious inequalities would seem unalterable.

These temporal differences are seen in perspective by the doctrine that in the light of eternity there are no differences at all.

III

It is not possible for most of us, however, to consider anything very clearly or steadily in the light of eternity. The doctrine of ultimate human equality cannot be tested in human experience; it rests on a faith which transcends experience. That is why those who understood the doctrine have always been ascetic; they ignored or renounced worldly goods and worldly standards. These things belonged to Caesar. The mystical democrat did not say that they should not belong to Caesar; he said that they would be of no use to Caesar ultimately, and that, therefore, they were not to be taken seriously now.

But in the reception of this subtle argument the essential reservation was soon obscured. The mystics were preaching equality only to those men who had renounced their carnal appetites; they were welcomed as preachers of equality in this world. Thus the doctrine that I am as good as you in eternity because all the standards of goodness are finite and temporary, was converted into the doctrine that I am as good as you are in this world by this world's standards. The mystics had attained a sense of equality by transcending and renouncing all the standards by which we measure inequality. The populace retained its appetites and its standards and then sought to deny the inequalities which they produced and revealed.

The mystical democrat had said, "Gold and precious stones are of no account"; the literal democrat understood him to say that everybody ought to have gold and precious stones. The mystical democrat had said, "Beauty is only skin deep"; and the literal democrat preened himself and said, "I always suspected I was as handsome as you." Reason, intelligence, learning, wisdom, dealt for the mystic only with passing events in a temporal world and could help men little to fathom the ultimate meaning of creation; to the literal democrat this incapacity of reason was evidence that one man's notion was intrinsically as good as another's.

Thus the primitive intuition of democracy became the animus of a philosophy which denied that there could be an order of values among men. Any opinion, any taste, any action was intrinsically as good as any other. Each stands on its own bottom and guarantees itself. If I feel strongly about it, it is right; there is no other test. It is right not only as against your opinion, but against my own opinions, about which I no longer feel so strongly. There is no arbitrament by which the relative value of opinions is determined. They are all free, they are all equal, all have the same rights and powers.

Since no value can be placed upon an opinion, there is no way in this philosophy of deciding between opinions except to count them. Thus the mystical sense of equality was translated to mean in practice that two minds are better than one mind and two souls better than one soul. Your true mystic would be horrified at the notion that you can add up souls and that the greater number is superior to the lesser. To him souls are imponderable and incommensurable; that is the only sense in which they are truly equal. And yet in the name of that sense of equality which he attains by denying that the worth of a soul can be measured, the worldly democrats have made the mere counting of souls the final arbiter of all worth. It is a curious misunderstanding; Mr. Bryan brought it into high relief during the Tennessee case. The spiritual doctrine that all men will stand at last equal before the throne of God meant to him that all men are equally good biologists before the ballotbox of Tennessee. That kind of democracy is quite evidently a gross materialization of an idea that in essence cannot be materialized. It is a confusing interchange of two worlds that are not interchangeable.

IV

Although the principle of majority rule derives a certain sanctity from the mystical sense of equality, it is really quite unrelated to it. There is nothing in the teachings of Jesus or St. Francis which justifies us in thinking that the opinions of fifty-one per cent of a group are better than the opinions of forty-nine per cent. The mystical doctrine of equality ignores the standards of the world and recognizes each soul as unique; the principle of majority rule is a device for establishing standards of action in this world by the crude and obvious device of adding up voters. Yet owing to a confusion between the two, the mystical doctrine has been brutalized and made absurd, and the principle of majority rule has acquired an unction that protects it from criticism. A mere political expedient, worth using only when it is necessary or demonstrably useful to the conduct of affairs, has been hallowed by an altogether adventitious sanctity due to an association of ideas with a religious hope of salvation.

Once we succeed in disentangling this confusion of ideas, it becomes apparent that the principle of majority rule is wholly alien to what the humane mystic feels. The rule of the majority is the rule of force. For while nobody can seriously maintain that the greatest number must have the greatest wisdom or the greatest virtue, there is no denying that under modern social conditions they are likely to have the most power. I say likely to have, for we are reminded by the recent history of Russia and of Italy that organized and armed minorities can under certain circumstances disfranchise the majority. Nevertheless, it is a good working premise that in the long run the greater force resides in the greater number, and what we call a democratic society might be defined for certain purposes as one in which the majority is always prepared to put down a revolutionary minority.

The apologists of democracy have done their best to dissemble the true nature of majority rule. They have argued that by some mysterious process the opinion to which a majority subscribes is true and righteous. They have even attempted to endow the sovereign majority with the inspiration of an infallible church and of kings by the grace of God. It was a natural mistake. Although they saw clearly enough that the utterances of the church were the decisions of the ruling clergy, and that the divine guidance of the king was exercised by his courtiers, they were not prepared to admit that the new sovereign was a purely temporal ruler. They felt certain they must ascribe to the majority of the voters the same supernatural excellence which had

always adhered to the traditional rulers. Throughout the Nineteenth Century, therefore, the people were flattered and mystified by hearing that deep within a fixed percentage of them there lay the same divine inspiration and the same gifts of revelation which men had attributed previously to the established authorities.

And then just as in the past men had invented a mythical ancestry for their king, tracing his line back to David or Æneas or Zeus himself, so the minnesingers of democracy have invented their own account of the rise of popular government. The classic legend is to be found in the theory of the Social Contract, and few naïve democrats are without traces of belief in this legend. They imagine that somehow "the people" got together and established nations and governments and institutions. Yet the historic record plainly shows that the progress of democracy has consisted in an increasing participation of an increasing number of people in the management of institutions they neither created nor willed. And the record shows, too, that new numbers were allowed to participate when they were powerful enough to force their way in; they were enfranchised not because "society" sought the benefits of their wisdom, and not because "society" wished them to have power; they were enfranchised because they had power, and giving them the vote was the least disturbing way of letting them exercise their power. For the principle of majority rule is the mildest form in which the force of numbers can be exercised. It is a pacific substitute for civil war in which the opposing armies are counted and the victory is awarded to the larger before any blood is shed.

Except in the sacred tests of democracy and in the incantations of the orators, we hardly take the trouble to pretend that the rule of the majority is not at bottom a rule of force. What other virtue can there be in fifty-one per cent except the brute fact that fifty-one is more than forty-nine? The rule of fifty-one per cent is a convenience, it is for certain matters a satisfactory political device, it is for others the lesser of two evils, and for still others it is acceptable because we do not know any less troublesome method of obtaining a political decision. But it may easily become an absurd tyranny if we regard it worshipfully, as though it were more than a political device. We have lost all sense of its true meaning when we imagine that the opinion of fifty-one per cent is in some high fashion the true opinion of the whole hundred per cent, or indulge in the sophistry that the rule of a majority is based upon the ultimate equality of man.

V

At Dayton Mr. Bryan contended that in schools supported by the state the majority of the voters had a right to determine what should be taught. If my analysis is correct, there is no fact from which that right can be derived except the fact that the majority is stronger than the minority. It cannot be argued that the majority in Tennessee represented the whole people of Tennessee; nor that fifty-one Tennesseeans are better than forty-nine Tennesseeans; nor that they were better biologists, or better Christians, or better parents, or better Americans. It cannot be said they are necessarily more in tune with the ultimate judgments of God. All that can be said for them is that there are more of them, and that in a world ruled by force it may be necessary to defer to the force they exercise.

When the majority exercises that force to destroy the public schools, the minority may have to yield for a time to this force but there is no reason why they should accept the result. For the votes of a majority have no intrinsic bearing on the conduct of a school. They are external facts to be taken into consideration like the weather or the hazard of fire. Guidance for a school

can come ultimately only from educators, and the question of what shall be taught as biology can be determined only by biologists. The votes of a majority do not settle anything here and they are entitled to no respect whatever. They may be right or they may be wrong; there is nothing in the majority principle which will make them either right or wrong. In the conduct of schools, and especially as to the details of the curriculum, the majority principle is an obvious irrelevance. It is not even a convenient device as it is in the determination say of who shall pay the taxes.

VI

But what good is it to deny the competence of the majority when you have admitted that it has the power to enforce its decisions? I enter this denial myself because I prefer clarity to confusion, and the ascriptions of wisdom to fifty-one per cent seems to me a pernicious confusion. But I do it also because I have some hope that the exorcising of the superstition which has become attached to majority rule will weaken its hold upon the popular imagination, and tend therefore to keep it within convenient limits. Mr. Bryan would not have won the logical victory he won at Dayton if educated people had not been caught in a tangle of ideas which made it seem as if the acknowledgment of the absolutism of the majority was necessary to faith in the final value of the human soul. It seems to me that a rigorous untangling of this confusion may help to arm the minority for a more effective resistance in the future.

THE DANGERS OF MODERNISM

BY HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

PARTISAN loyalty is one of the easiest and cheapest virtues to acquire in any realm, and in religion, as our denominational situation long has shown, it is so cheap and easy that in its results it is hardly distinguishable from vice. Just now some of its unhappy consequences are seen in the strained relationships between the fundamentalists and modernists. Men are reluctantly, but under present conditions quite inevitably, being forced into one group or the other. Then, wearing a tag, they must display it; following a banner, they must be true to it; their party becomes a "cause"; and at last they achieve the *summum bonum* of all partisanship — the ability to believe everything evil about the other side and everything good about their own. Half of our fiery controversies would die out for lack of fuel if it were not for that sort of partisanship. In the present juncture of religious affairs in particular few things are more needed than fundamentalists with some honest doubts about fundamentalism and modernists with some searching misgivings about modernism.

One of our leading American liberals has recently summed up the present situation as a division between "arid liberalism" and "acrid literalism." The trouble with that statement is that there is so much uncomfortable truth in it. Modernists are naturally alive to the reprehensible qualities of the "acrid literalism" which is alienating large areas of intelligent youth from Christianity; but one of the most beneficent enterprises in which any modernist can now engage is the painstaking and perhaps painful facing of his own party's glaring faults—and, above all, the notorious spiritual aridity of some of our liberalism.

The perils into which modernism commonly runs are inevitably associated with the sources from which it springs. For one thing, the liberal movement in religion is a protest against the fundamentalist assault upon intelligence. That assault is real and dangerous. If it should succeed it would bring on a twentieth-century replica of the dark ages in religion. Here in Geneva, Switzerland, I have just been reading in one of the leading journals of the city an article on the situation in America, in which the public is informed that the fundamentalists "have succeeded in prohibiting in all the universities and schools of the state of New York the teaching of the theories of Einstein." Doubtless, that is a mere journalistic inference from our experiment in Tennessee, a prophetic foregleam of the fundamentalist heaven realized at last, but it does help an American to feel the shocked amazement with which the intelligence of the rest of the world regards our present orgy of medievalism.

Modernism feels acutely the danger of this situation, sees clearly—as it began to see long before this present crisis came —that the divorce of religion from in-

telligence is fatal to religion. The application of historical methods to the understanding of the Bible, painstaking, unprejudiced research into the development of Christianity and its institutions, the sympathetic study of other religions, hospitality to modern science even when that means discarding old forms of thought, the restatement of religious experience in terms of new views of the world, the endeavor to apply Christian principles to contemporary social situations—all these typical activities of modernism spring from the desire to preserve a cordial alliance between religion and intelligence.

That this alliance must be fought for if we are not to lose it seems clear, and the fundamentalists have no one but themselves to blame for the insistence with which modernists force the issue. A few weeks ago in New York a prominent fundamentalist brought a mass meeting of his fellows to tumultuous cheers by the climactic assertion, "I would rather have my son learn his A B C's in heaven than know his Greek in hell." Well, who wouldn't? But why the dilemma? Why this constant intimation that intelligence and Christianity are incompatible? It was not a small man, but the most towering fundamentalist figure of this generation, who insisted before thousands of audiences from coast to coast that it was more important to know the Rock of Ages than the ages of the rock. Who doubts it? But why the contrast? Why this tireless insinuation that an intelligent man who knows the ages of the rock cannot know the Rock of Ages too? The nemesis of this sort of thing is already upon us in many of our youth who believe what they are being told and, not willing to foreswear intelligence, are surrendering Christianity.

This, then, is one of the major origins of modernism. It takes up the cudgels for intelligence in religion. The central interest of many a modernist minister more and more gathers at that point. In his idealistic and spiritually minded youth his dominant thought in religion may have centered in an ardent consciousness of fellowship with God and a deep desire to be a channel for new life to men, but now it gravitates increasingly toward one end—he does wish to stand for modern intelligence in his community. And there, where one of his greatest virtues lies, is also his pitfall. A fundamentalist minister who, with all his fundamentalism, loves men and is centrally interested in the inward life which men live with God and their own consciences, will do much more good than a modernist who, in desperately trying to be modern, forgets what religion is all about.

Here arises that "arid liberalism" which, after all, is fundamentalism's best friend. Becoming a modernist because he believes that real religion and the scientific view of the world are not incompatible, a man proceeds diligently and zealously to set forth the scientific view of the world, as though, if people would only believe in evolution, the reign of law, the new psychology, the historical method of dealing with sacred literatures, and other such matrices of modern thought, religion would be safely preserved for the future generations. But that is a foolish reliance. Such mental frame-works, whether old or new, are not the deep springs from which religion rises in the human heart. St. Francis of Assisi had world-views that any child in a grammar school could easily correct, but that did not prevent his being a glorious saint, and many a modern man is as up to date as the last news from the laboratory can make him but that does not prevent his being an abysmal pagan.

Indeed, one can push this statement farther. The fundamentalists are right in thinking that assiduously acquired knowledge is often a positive burden on spontaneous, creative spiritual life. That is a startling statement of Ruskin that "Raphael painted best when he knew least." Take it with a grain of salt, as one must generally take Ruskin's sweeping aphorisms, but, for all that, the truth

is there. After his glorious early work Raphael nearly ruined himself trying to imitate Michelangelo and acquire the latest Renaissance style. If by "knowing" one means his strenuous endeavor to acquire the mode of Renaissance Rome, then it is true that Raphael did paint best when he knew least.

That sort of thing is true of many a liberal preacher. He is so anxious to be rational that he forgets to be religious. For religion is not created, saved, or propagated by the rationality of its thought-forms, much as that ought to help. Religion's central and unique property is power to release faith and courage for living, to produce spiritual vitality and fruitfulness; and by that she ultimately stands or falls. That is the bread which man's hunger tirelessly seeks in religion and will accept in every conceivable form of thought, from Roman Catholic veneration of the saints to the metaphysics of Mrs. Eddy. If as modernists we believe that we have rational world-views as vehicles for our faith, well and good. I agree. Moreover, we must not trim about the matter and, if need be, must fight for liberty within the churches to think the priceless experiences of religion through in terms that modern-minded people comprehend. But to rely on our mere modernism for the furtherance of vital religion, with which we should be preeminently concerned, is absurd. The issue of that is desiccation and barrenness. Liberal Christianity will never win the day merely because it is intelligent but because, being intelligent, it proves able in this new generation to inspire ardent faith in God, open men's lives to his sustaining companionship, make Christ and all that he stands for the burning center of imagination and devotion, release men from the tyranny of fear, sickness, and sin, create robust, serviceable character, transform social, economic, international life, produce saints, martyrs, prophets, and apostles worthy to stand in the succession of those long acknowledged by the Church Universal.

Such is the test of any Christianity, and modernism need expect no special favors. Our chief enemy is not "acrid literalism." That cannot last. The stars in their courses fight against that Sisera. Our chief enemy is "arid liberalism."

MODERNISM has another origin in profound dissatisfaction with the present denominational situation. The hundred and more sects into which the Christian movement in America is to-day divided present a spectacle at once so pathetic and so ridiculous that Christian people who deeply care about the fortunes of religion could not be expected to be silent. To be sure, it is easy in general to defend denominationalism. Are not differences of opinion inevitable? Are not parties in politics and schools of medicine diverse and various? Are not parties in politics and schools of medicine diverse and various? Why, then, expect religion to exhibit a tranquil, undifferentiated unity?

That sort of generality, however, misses the real issue. Nobody should expect that any magic of Christian charity or comprehensive organization will subdue the diversities of religious thought and bring in an era of theological and ecclesiastical unanimity. If for a day such a heavenly consequence could be achieved, the next morning would see the trouble start again—the placid surface of artificial unity would crack into new fissures. As far ahead as we can see there will be denominations.

What has that to do, however, with the defense of these existent sects? Parties in politics, medicine, law, or religion that represent living issues serve an indispensable function; but parties that represent nothing worthy of serious thought, that persistently endeavor to galvanize into life issues properly dead generations ago, that waste the loyalties of men, crucially needed for large matters, on trivial discriminations of belief and practice, which have no consequence one way or another in personal and

social character—what can be said in defense of them?

Wearing hooks and eyes but not buttons, being baptized with much water, not with little, excluding preachers, however gifted with prophetic power, who are not ordained with tactual apostolic succession, signing, even though one interpret it to shreds, the Westminster Confession or some other ancient creed as a *sine qua non* of being a minister, modeling church government on direct rather than representative democracy or vice versa—such matters underlie most of our present divisions. Will some one please rise up to explain just what pertinent relationship these things have to the deep spiritual needs of men and the moral welfare of the nation?

Not all who feel the shame of this situation are modernists, but all modernists feel the shame of this situation. It is one of the characteristic marks of modernism to care little or nothing for present denominational divisions, to think them negligible, even contemptible, to wonder how intelligent people can be excited over them when such tremendous issues face Christian thought and such challenging causes call for Christian loyalty. Once New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut were engaged in bitter tariff disputes, were divided by unappeasable jealousies, and almost came to open war. But now, when the real issue is America's relationship with the international progress of the world, who would dream of laboriously whipping up old controversies like that in politics? Yet our denominations are most expensively and deliberately doing just that sort of thing in religion.

Such in general is a typical modernist's attitude and once more his virtue is likely to be his undoing. For he is always tempted to turn his back on a situation so deplorable. If he is strong enough he may lead a schism, conducting a group of churches out of an old sect—only to face this singular nemesis that, if in this protest against denominationalism he succeeds, he founds a new denomination. Or if he is not strong enough for that, he is likely to become an isolated individualist, like Kipling's cat walking "by his wild lone," careless of Christianity's organized expressions, contemptuous of those now existent, and not statesmanlike enough to plan hopefully for anything better. So out of modernist virtue comes modernist vice, and by another route men in whom ought to be the hope of the churches land in "arid liberalism."

The fault in this attitude is primarily lack of insight. There is a great deal more in these old denominations than the trifling peculiarities which ostensibly distinguish them. Around them and their traditions, their ways of worship, their habits of thought has gathered much of the finest spiritual quality and moral devotion that we have to rely upon. These churches have become more than the items of their creeds and policies that can be reckoned up and counted; they have become to multitudes of people symbols of spiritual life, shrines of household memories and personal loyalty. Their wreck would involve much dependent flower and foliage, well worth preserving, which is growing on them. To forget this is always the temptation of the radical. It was not a preacher but a professor at Columbia who recently commented on those extremists who "combine a singular sense of the literal absurdities of religious forms with a marked insensibility to their symbolic values." Let modernists take note! It is one thing to recognize that a waterbucket is outmoded; it is another to appreciate that it still may carry living water.

I felt this recently about a form of religious thought and practice as far as possible removed from my own, when, sitting in a Roman Catholic church, I watched a very young girl trying to teach her still younger brother to say his prayers before the altar. It was an impressive sight. It would have been impressive even if one of Bellini's glorious madonnas, from above the altar, had not

held out a radiant Christ-Child to the kneeling children. As it was, one easily could have wept to see symbolized there that deep virtue in Catholicism which Protestantism has so largely lost—prayer from our infancy up as an habitual discipline of the soul, the daily use of the churches for prayer, where rich and poor, old and young, come one by one to renew their fellowship with the surrounding, impinging, friendly, unseen world of saints and angels.

Nothing is to be done in this realm by scorn. No one is fit to handle these questions who has not learned the fine art of reverencing other people's reverences. That is a lesson which impatient modernists need commonly to learn.

The liberal movement in Christianity never can expect to arrive at any hopeful conclusion until it thus quits its superciliousness about the churches and, without abating one jot of its conviction about their follies, sets itself resolutely to build out of them the kind of churches that this new generation needs. If it can do that, it wins. If it cannot do that or refuses to try, it will evaporate. Its vagueness and nebulosity are its chief popular handicaps now; but wherever some church breaks through the exclusive features of its own denominationalism, supersedes them, becomes inclusive of the community's best spiritual life and so exerts a dynamic force for real Christianity which no right-minded person in the town can gainsay, there liberalism gets a local habitation and a name. That is an argument understood of the people. And to do that requires patience, sympathy, courage, and hard work to a degree that evidently overtaxes the resources of some modernists.

They try an easier road. Ministers and laymen, they quit. From outside any active responsibility for the churches they pour contempt upon the folly of denominations. Or else they try on paper to construct some ideal, theoretical church union, some grandiose scheme of universal creed and comprehensive organization that will include everybody—a method of procedure which, however educational in some of its effects, will never actually work. One way or another, too many modernists are evading the tasks of patient churchmanship in local communities.

The continuance of that means ruin to the liberal cause. There are no short-cuts to great ends. The overpassing of our present ignoble denominationalism and the achievement of inclusive churches which will pave the way for ultimate unity on a larger scale, means tireless, persistent work and experimentation in local fields. Unless modernists see that clearly, the fundamentalists will wipe them off the religious map. The liberals are vehemently critical of the present churches; they are amply justified, but that is not the test. Can they themselves build churches that will meet the needs of this new generation, become shrines of devotion, centers of spiritual inspiration and practical service, worthy, as our children shall see them in retrospect, to be part of the "holy Church throughout all the world"? That is the test.

The sum of the whole matter is this: modernism up to date has been largely a movement of protest and criticism. It has originated in reaction against obscurantist assaults on Christian intelligence and against the continuance of meaningless denominational divisions. It inevitably has the faults of its qualities, but it is high time it recovered from them. If it is to serve any abiding purpose it must pass through protest to production, through criticism to creation. Whenever it does that, it wins. The most effective Christian churches that I know to-day are manned by liberals. Multiply such and the day is won.

THE GRAY GOOSE

A STORY

BY WILBUR DANIEL STEELE

THE sky, going toward night, was going also toward winter. Where the remnant of light broke through the cloud it had a quality as edged as sunshine, though the sun was set. It rayed earthward and eastward in motionless pencils, a light queerly fit to this marshland solitude, a harsh, pale dilute light fit to nebulous expectancy and to nostalgia for lost worlds. It was as if there might be imagined the adventure a thousandfold dread, of walking on the plain of the Day of Doom alone.

The thing about the cloud was that it neither drifted nor changed. Beneath it there was a wind, bearing the rustle of reeds and the cries of seabirds and waterfowl, gulls far off, ducks nearer and louder, and gray geese arrowing down toward the perilous night-sanctuary of the pools.

The thing about the flatness of the marsh was that it had a hill on it. And the hill had a house. Whether it was a dwelling-house or only a storehouse Maynard never knew. When he was going toward it, mounting heavily under the weight of his gunning gear and the big gray goose, it stood over him in dark silhouette against the broken cloud. And when he was standing before the door on the other side, where the pale red coming up from under the cloud's rim was like the beam of footlights, he seemed never to see anything but the six wind-polished panels of the door itself.

And the thing about the fist of knuckles he held lifted to rap was that something always happened before it fell on the hollow wood of that house of enigma on the hill in the waste. . . .

This time the interruption was Mike Fiske, in the alley under Maynard's window, where the patrolman had stumbled upon a drunk.

"*You* don't want me runnin' ye in; get up like a darlint and go home!"

Then, farther off, on the paving blocks of Sixth Avenue, the rattle of early market wagons began. The City returned and closed in.

In the dark of the bedroom tears of mutinous chagrin wet the boy's eyes. He lay rigid, not trying to sleep, for he hadn't been asleep (he never dreamed the dream of the marsh and the house on the hill other than wide awake), but trying if he couldn't forget himself, this once, and have it back again—knowing he couldn't all the time.

Maynard Ross dreamed plenty of things asleep, and plenty of day-dreams too, perhaps more than most boys in their 'teens—fantasies common enough in their beginnings, a whole romance from the smile in a passing eye, a whole melodrama from the set of Police Captain Sayre's shoulders as he entered the back door of the Terrace Bar, and windy adventures woven in the gear of ships plowing the tide before his lookout on some North River pier.

Yes, ships especially (and in the eighties there were still plenty of them with golden women above their cutwaters and white towers of sail-bright ships starting out for beyond the world and worn ships

coming home) ships, especially, put the looms of reverie to work. For, from the first time Maynard ever slipped away from the street games and came to the river and saw a deep-water rover, a bark of ebony and gossamer and spun-gold, going down the tide with her gaskets loosed and her crew like gnomes chanting at their work, he knew where he too was going—when he could.

He had been only eleven that time—young enough never to be able to forget the moment when, down in the fair wind abreast of the Battery, the smoking tugboat, that had held and offended the lovely wanderer till then, had to withdraw its dirty tentacles at last and let her go—that moment when, feeling herself freed of the city thing and blue water before her, she unfolded, blossom by swift blossom, till she was all a white tower and victory of bloom, and the wind careened her, and she was gone.

Always thereafter, in unconscious symbol, Maynard's destiny was the fair ship with keel impatient in the stream, and the tugboat was the greedy grimy city, unwilling to unwind its tentacles and let him go. At fifteen he had written his one poem, a youngster's solemn hymn of hate: "I hate this daily bread I eat, I hate this house, I hate this street, this town. . . ."

Musings and dreams, he had enough of them: fabrics woven of the threads of the life he saw, heard, smelled, tasted, felt. But the fantasy of the marshland and the hunter who carried a wild goose toward a building solitary on a hill was a phenomenon of a separate sort altogether. It had never been woven, for it came to him whole; its stuff was no stuff that any sense or memory could have let him know about. The nearest he had ever been to a shotgun was the outside of the window of a Grand Street hardware store. He had never been out of his city streets, never seen a wasteland or all the heavens at once. And if, tiny in the deep of the narrow sky between the cornices, his eyes may sometime have chanced upon a winging glyph, certainly no one had ever told him that it was a flight of geese.

So he couldn't know. Yet he did know. Never once, from the hour in his twelfth year when first the illusion stole upon him and he found himself tramping beneath the broken cloud across a waste of reeds and pools, had he fumbled or wanted in any detail the feel of his gear, the balance of his gun, the weight of his stiffening trophy, the shape or color of the pencils of twilight raying across the unheard-of world. He had never had to learn; he had always known all about everything, everything but the house which he couldn't see distinctly and the door on which he somehow couldn't rap. Whatever the enigma, of menace, of promise, that stood beyond those panels waiting, it remained enigma to the end.

In the small of this April morning Maynard had opened his eyes from sleep and, staring into the dark, had passed immediately into the landscape of his illusion. . . . Why was it so especially bitter this time, when the voices of the city around him pulled him back?

He groped, found a match, and lighted it to look at the time. The clock that stood on his mantle was mounted in blue-brown marble with ormolu figures, a pretentious piece, fairly valuable. But the important thing about it, in the flare of Maynard's match, was that it wasn't there.

Then he remembered. Yesterday the widow, his mother, had carried it off to the loan-office, to pay for the new jacket folded over Maynard's chair and the new shoes side by side beneath it now. The match burned his fingers and went out. Maynard remembered.

Yesterday the boy and his dreams of roving were finished; to-day the man of the family was going to work. From this morning forward he was going to sit on the high stool in Councilman McKenna's hay-and-grain office in the alley behind Sheridan Square. No time for ships and seas and marshland wan-

derings, not when McKenna paid for it. No room for the heart of a vagabond to swell in that stiff new jacket on the chair.

Lying there on his back in the graying dark, the boy shut his fists up. It wasn't rebellion. It started out to be rebellion, but went beyond that quickly. It was horrid fright. He saw the city of a sudden the devourer; the walls of McKenna's counting-room the devourer's hand reaching out to close on him to-day. Once closed, he knew it would never, never open again.

He got out of bed, shivering, for he had made the deepest decision of his life. He tried at the same time to hurry and to be quiet, but he dropped things and, fast as he worked, the dawn worked faster, paling the window.

It was gray even in the hall when he stole out to it, his shoes in one hand, his fugitive's baggage in the other, his eyes big with panic on the gantlet of half-open doors he had to run before he reached the stairs. Here was his mother's; he heard her measured breathing; there his brother Basil's, and Basil was snoring. And Annie, cross the way —little Annie, the eldest, and still, at nineteen, sleeping in a bed hardly bigger than a crib.

But was she sleeping? At that door crack he heard no breathing but his own, which grew stentorian. Now in the alarm of his imagination he seemed to see her standing hardly more than waist-high in the gloom of the aperture, weighing his purpose with her large brown dwarf's-eyes, in her dwarf's-silence, not of appeal, but of accusation.

"You are strong, Mayne, but what of us?"

"What of you? Well, I say, what of *me?* What of my immortal soul?"

"You're all we have to keep us, mother, Basil, and poor impossible me."

"Mother? Let her take in washing; there are lots that do. Basil can sell papers, can't he? And you? You can go with the circus you were bid for last summer and live in luxury. That's asking only your pride. What you ask of me is my life, my life. You shan't have it. It's already given—given before I was born—to something—somewhere—somewhere out there beneath a sun and moon you never saw, and the farthest stars. And now, I don't care, I'm going, I'm going, I'm going now!"

In Annie's room there was a sigh and a creak of springs. It was only the disturbance of one, unawakened, turning over in a little bed. Annie too had been sleeping all this while.

The ship *Sea Princess* lay in a slip in the North River. Her cargo of West Indies sugar was out; all but two of her lines were cast off from the dock, above whose level, in her light condition, her rail rode shoulder high; she was ready for her departure. More than ready. Her spars already burning in the rose of dawn coming over the low mountain of the city to the east, while her decks still remained in the shadow left by the night, it would almost have seemed that the pull-to-go was perpendicular, not horizontal; as if it were the sky on her mast-top that beckoned her upwards rather than the tide against her keel that enticed her out.

Her master, standing on the height of the after-house to watch the dawdling approach of the tugboat from the river's other side, swore to himself, "Of all the lazy devils!" He might have considered that, caught in the glittering dawn-light, transfigured and not unbeautiful for once, the grubby little harbor-slattern might be forgiven for loitering in that moment as long as she could, but his mind was too rude with impatience. It marked the sunshine only as a thing that crept relentlessly down the spars before him, consuming the priceless moments of the morning and the tide.

One ray, deeper than the rest, touched the ship's rail near the forward channels on the dockward side. There it trapped in a spotlight a man with rubbed-off hair, fun-loving little blue eyes, a copper-colored beard with a big slouching chest

below it, and thick short arms purpled with tattooing—but all of him of a sudden red-gold in that illumination, even to the tobacco juice he spat overboard idly as he amused himself with the strange youngster on the dock below.

"Do we need a man?" He appeared to cogitate. On the slowly masticating cheeks a quiver of a grin appeared. "Where's the man?"

"I'm the man, sir." The boy stood tall. "*I'm* the man!"

"Oh-h! Mm-m!" Pretending to study the nearing tugboat, the mate winked at the cook and the carpenter, standing by at the bowline a few feet away. "Well, my man, and just what can you do?"

"I can do anything."

"So ho! Lucky for us then you came here. . . . So ho! So ho! I suppose you can lay me a Turk's-head as smooth as an apple, and I suppose you can lay me a one-handed, back-handed Matty Walker knot, and your eyes shut too."

Maynard lied exultantly, "Yes!"

"But can you live ninety days on salt cockroach and boiled weevils, eh?"

"I can!"

"Can you lay out a royal yard and yank a buntline with ice on the cloth as thick's your finger and a gale of wind to knock your breath out and the spars rolling down till the seas'll get you if you don't pray?"

"I can do all that, I can!"

"Can you use your knife like a heathen, down them hot-country anchorages? Can you carry your rum like a gentleman, and talk Dago with the Dago girls? Sometimes we've need of a lion tamer; are you good with lions and the like?"

The boy could only gulp and vehemently nod. "I—I'm your m-m-man!" His eyes were big on the gold-red seagod, and the color was on his cheeks. He heaved up his arms, forgetting youth's shame of spectacles. "Take me! I'm strong, sir, and willing. I'm your man, wherever you're bound."

"Ah, but there's the snag." The man's expression grew secretive, though the eyes still gleamed. "Where we're bound to—that's another thing."

"I don't care; you needn't tell me. Only—will there be strange people?"

"Strange is no name."

"Does a fellow learn to speak their language soon?"

"In time, in time."

"And one more thing, tell me, is it high land or low?"

The mate chuckled. "Some places it's no land at all, according to the stories, and the mosquitoes big enough to pass for ducks and geese."

"Yes, yes—and a hill?"

"A hill?"

"And a house?"

"The Hell!" The mate rolled off the rail and out of the light of glory. "What you givin' us—'*a house*'? Can't you see 'em by the hundreds with your own two eyes?"

"Where?"

"Over there where we're going. For Cripe sakes, where'd you '*magine* we was bound for, with only Chips and the Doctor there for crew? Round the Horn?"

"But—where?" There was the beginning of a note of wailing.

"Over yonder to Peregrin's shipyard for new copper, of course. . . . Here, Schuster, lend me a hand lively with that towboat's line. . . ."

A light went out. Caught in the lee of the buildings, the tug's smoke drifted in among the spars of the dead thing that had been, but a wink ago, a living argosy of wanderers, pennoned with flame. A dirty shadow and a bitter breath. . . . The mate, returning, noticed the boy still there.

"What's wrong, sonny—anchored there?" Scratching his beard he grinned. "Come on along, join on. Pay you a penny an hour, and you can catch the ferry home to mama before the sun goes down. Join on for the perilous voyage across the water to the Jersey Side."

"The *Jersey Side!*" It was all May-

nard said, but all the bitterness of disenchantment was in the scorn of it and all the tragedy of defeated youth. Through one street loud with empty beer barrels and another where an early horse car kept him company, his dead feet carried him back home.

When his mother got up that morning she found him already afoot, dressed in his new clothes, for his new job. Her eyes shown with faith and pride.

"I don't know what we'd do if it 'tweren't for you, Mayne. . . . Come look at your brother, Annie; isn't he big and fine and good? . . . Mayne—why, sonny—what's that you're winking? Tears?"

II

. . . Tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp. Now sedges, now saw-toothed grasses mixed with lichen, caving under the boots, now a pool and an interminable detour. Under the inert and lumpy cloud, touched by cool fingers of ruby light, the house seemed years away ahead; the hill looked no bigger than a washbowl turned up-side-down.

The goose hung heavier in the hand, but not so heavy as the wonder in the huntsman's heart.

"What am I doing? What's it all about?"

Sweeps of recollection, dim as the sailing of fish through dream-lit depths. A formless nostalgia—the press of a nameless anticipation—the hollow-stomached feeling, half-abashed, half-thrilled, of a boy lost.

"I had forgotten. Was it always so far to go?"

He began to hurry. Of a sudden, holding the goose high in one hand and the gun in the other like a cane, he began to run. . . .

There intervened a squealing. The dry wheels of an "L" train on the curve between Bleeker and Sixth Avenue. The backfire of a milk truck.

Maynard Ross, alderman, sat up in bed and looked at the clock. There was no need of a light, for dawn was a dirty pink in the window.

"Of all things!" Rubbing a hand over his eyes he found his brow damp with perspiration. Something of enchantment still clung to him; he felt queerly abashed, curiously dismayed. It was a good ten years since he had suffered the last of these delusions—yes, fifteen, since they had been anything like dominant. He had nearly forgotten.

Why, then, this morning?

From the clock the alderman's eyes went to the open bags on the floor. Then he recollected. Yesterday the life that had belonged to others was finished; to-day it was to be given him back again. His knees trembled a little as he got out of bed, but he couldn't bother with them; before the hour of eleven he had much to do.

Besides dressing and closing up his bags and breakfasting, he had to go over the house with Mary Finn, the housekeeper (her eyes still red from little Annie's funeral day before yesterday), giving his last directions for putting things away. Then he had to stand for a moment in the upper hall, confronted by the gantlet of doors ranged between him and the stairs, and tell himself again that it was true. Nobody there. Poor Annie gone where her mother had gone eight years before her, the dwarf body escaped and the soul full grown at last. It was hard to realize that the years were served, the life's job done, and the hobbles unloosed from round the ankles of the man who had been born to be a rover.

A rover in a steamship! Never mind. He wasn't a boy; he was entering middle age; and steam goes as far as sail. And at least there was this—he didn't know where it would carry him, and no one but Basil (if Basil had found his note at Headquarters) knew that he was going away.

At the thought of Basil his eyes darkened. "Where is he? He might at least have come to his sister's funeral? He might have done that."

Leaving the house, he stopped the taxi at a postbox and dropped into it his letter of resignation from the Board; then on to his office in the sprawl of his shops and warehouses behind Sheridan Square. To the buyers, a Greek and a Polish Jew, he delivered the deeds, receiving their certified check in return. It was finished. But he didn't immediately rise to go.

Was it because he was honest, with the honesty of the adding-machine which can't go wrong about dollars and decimal points even if it would? Or was it because he felt as he did about money, which, needed and hated and gone after with the grubbing patience of a dead heart, ends by coming of its own momentum and its own accord? Or was it, more simply, that it hadn't been given him to make a gesture in twenty-five masked and buttoned-up years?

Whatever it was, he said to them in his dry, painstaking fashion, "I have been figuring a little since I accepted your offer five days ago. I believe that the automotive business is going north; the horse cab is dead. This loss will not altogether be balanced by the Sixth Avenue Extension through here. You have paid me too much for this property by twenty thousand dollars." He laid before them his personal check. "Thank you, gentlemen. Good-by."

The taxi was the great-grandfather of all taxis. The taxi driver was not of the modern kind; he was human and garrulous. At the Ninth Avenue crossing of Twenty-third Street, held up by the traffic, he took an interest in his fare. Nodding at the low spars and high fat stacks above the roofs at the street's end, he said, "Looks to me 's if you were bound across the pond, Mister. But I s'pose that kind of thing's nothing to you."

The precise, spare gentleman on the rear seat wasn't looking at the stacks ahead; he was sitting as bolt and still as an image, his eyes on his fists and his fists tight on his knees to keep them from wobbling. A faint plum color suffused his cheeks, as if he had been holding his breath for some time. Jehu loudened his voice and went on:

"Some 're lucky that way, some 're not. Now here's me. I'm forty years old this week, and the fu'threst I ever been is Bridgeport, Connecticut. But there you are, Mister; that's life."

The gentleman had heard. He parted his lips only a little way, as though they were brittle. "I'm older than you; I'm forty-two. I've never been off the island of Manhattan in my life—until to-day." It was the first confidence Maynard Ross had been betrayed into uttering for a quarter of a century. The plum color changed to bright red; he struck his knees and cried harshly, "Drive on, won't you! Can't you see it's clear ahead now? I'm not paying you for conversation, and I haven't all day!"

It was true, he hadn't. Things had taken longer than he had expected and he was running it rather fine. He was the last in the crowded half-gloom of the dock shed to have his trunks and tickets seen to, and he was glad. There were so many people waiting there, waiting and gazing up the side of the impatient ship that showed only a strip of its body between the platform and the iron eaves, or yonder, already half escaped into the adventure of clockless time and measureless space, waiting, calling back, waving down from the decks above—friends to friends—yes, he was glad, being as solitary as a fugitive, that the gangplank was but fifty feet off and its handlers already standing by.

And yet he wasn't ready; he didn't cross the fifty feet immediately, but stood among his bags by the purser's inclosure, studying the passing and repassing faces of strangers' friends and feeling, of a sudden, a little hollow under the diaphragm.

For the better part of three decades he had been preoccupied only in keeping his heart hidden and his mask on straight; he had even found a perverse glee in the fact that no one had ever got near enough to discover who he was and

be his friend, not even his mother and Annie, who had known of him only that he was dour, uncommunicative, industrious, and without passionate need of anything so far as they could see. As for Basil, all Basil had ever comprehended of his elder brother was that he was happily of a sedentary disposition, easily found when quickly wanted—just always there.

"I wonder if Basil got my note." The hollow grew hollower. "It seems to me he *might* have. He might at least have come to say good-by."

Leaving his bags, he was edging away to have another angle on the throng of others' friends when beyond the iron sky the steamer tried its whistle, rocking the air and making the footing shiver. And a steward plucked his sleeve.

"Not on yet, sir? Is this your luggage? Gangplank's coming away directly; are you coming, sir?"

"Damn Basil!" Of a sudden he was grateful to Basil for not knowing or caring a hang about him; precisely for not being there. He turned on the steward. "Yes, now I'm coming! Lead along."

Fifty feet. It was funny; the act of decision hadn't been when, on impulse, he had telephoned for the steamer reservation; it hadn't been till now. He hadn't actually believed till this instant that it was actually going to happen—that he was dead and born again. Forty feet to the gangplank. Twenty feet. The hand that had closed on him was opening now.

At the plank there was a face he knew. It belonged to a lawyer named Fishbein. Fishbein took hold of his sleeve.

"My God, Alderman, I been looking everywhere. It's about your brother."

"I'm late, Fishbein. Let me go."

"Yes, but one minute. They got Basil on the Flostead killing."

"He had nothing to do with it. I happen to know. I can prove that. . . . But look, they're holding the plank for me. I'm going, so let me go."

"You could prove it, yes, sure. Where's that get us? You know it's a frame-up; so does everybody. You know it's politics. You know the gang. You know who's behind 'em. You know City Hall. What can you do?"

"I can't do anything. . . . Yes, there, one moment. I'm coming right along."

"All I came for. The kid and I thought you might like to know. Not that it makes any difference in your going; you're as helpless as him and I."

Maynard passed a palm over his eyes. The thudding of his heart had ceased.

"Helpless? Why do you say—helpless?"

"Against that gang? When they need a goat like they need one now? My God, Ross, who do you think you are—the Mayor of this town?"

Again Maynard put his hand over his eyes. Then he said to the fidgetting steward, "You may put my bags back here. Tell them not to hold the gangplank any longer. . . . Fishbein, help me with these, will you? Find me a cab if there's one around, and tell him to drive me to Fourteenth Street, to Tammany Hall."

III

It was still early afternoon, but the air in the hotel suite where they had gathered to await the returns grew stifling. Outside there was a fall of snow mixed with rain. Not pleasant; yet Maynard wished he were out there getting wet instead of in here being strangled.

If he got up, somebody offered him another chair; if he sat down, they were immediately all round him again. It was this, perhaps—their assumption of intimacy and proprietory crowding, rather than the bad air, that made him break out from time to time in a hot sweat and see motes swimming before his eyes. Or perhaps it was simply that, nearing sixty, without realizing it, he was of a sudden growing old.

It must have been something; none of the others seemed to mind the air. There was "Big Jim," continually on

the move, showing the white of his waistcoat and rallying his "best friend on earth, the coming mayor of New York."

"Hear that just now from Brokaw, down in the Third? The talk down there is, the Fusion voters are scratching Merriman right and left. Oh boy!"

There was "Little Barney," the Senate leader, grinning and winking.

"No hope, Ross, I guess they've sold you a job. And after that, you mark my word, what they're going to do is give you a trip up the river—" But then, recollecting that there was one who had been in actuality "up the river" and even in the death-house there, he glanced toward Basil's back and added hastily, "—to Albany, my friend."

"He loves to travel so, I wish 'em luck," someone chuckled. "Better luck than we had getting him down to Richmond or over to Queens."

They all laughed at that except Maynard. He got to his feet and pushed through them, almost rudely, making for a free space near a window. They would be after him soon, but a moment's respite was something.

They could afford to laugh now, damn them, seeing his stubborn ultimatum now in retrospect as a stroke of political genius. "Show myself? Speak? My face is not my fortune, gentlemen, nor is my tongue. If they want to make me their mayor, well and good. If they want to see me or hear me, let them come to me where I am." They gave him credit for astuteness now; they thought they knew why he had insisted upon making a passive campaign, remaining at once stationary and aloof, mysterious. They couldn't have guessed in years the secret that lay behind his refusal to go out into the other boroughs across the river and the bay. Even Basil, the almost forgotten reason for Maynard's finding himself here to-day, borne by the momentum of the fighting he hated, long after the fight was won —had it been asked of Basil, "Has your brother ever set foot outside his own borough in his life?" he would have gaped. "Why, I don't know. I suppose so. Why shouldn't he have?"

Why shouldn't he, indeed? And yet Maynard hadn't, and that was the secret known to himself alone. Perverse? Yes. As perverse as a disgruntled youngster's, "All right, I *won't* then; I wouldn't if you *begged* me now." Perverse, and in a way, as the years grew, sporting. A principle maintained by any artifice, any sacrifice. . . .

They thought they knew him. All they knew was that he was "always there," and that in the welter of post-war confusion and mistrust the quality of "always thereness" was worth ten times its weight in any other virtue. All they knew (for it had become a legend) was that years ago he had voluntarily returned the tenth of a purchase price to a Greek and a Jew. All they knew was that he had fought seven years against abominable odds to vindicate his little brother and crush the Gang. That was all. And now, if at midnight the white shaft from the Times Building pointed west, the man who hated contact with human beings as he hated nothing else would walk out into that street below, the headman of human millions, and the mayor of a city three parts of which he had never seen.

The snowy rain had let up for a time. Pressing his forehead to the cool pane and looking west between two towers, Maynard thought to himself, "We shall have a sunset after all."

They were after him once more. He heard "Little Barney's" voice and felt the weight of "Big Jim's" tread. The room was suffocating again and the motes swimming before his eyes. He wheeled and amazed them, "What the devil do you want?" Then, confusedly, "It's hot here—I—I don't think I—"

The next he knew he was in the corridor outside, Basil with one arm, "Big Jim" with the other, and an unfamiliar fire of brandy down his throat. With his first return of strength (prophetic-

ally perhaps) he freed himself of the Boss's hand.

"Basil," he said, "where are our coats and hats? Would you mind taking a turn around the block with me? . . . Nothing, Jim. We'll be right back."

They got out by a side way, undetected, into Thirtieth Street. As they approached the cross-stream of Election-Day Broadway, the older one took hold of the younger one's arm. "Basil!" he said.

"Yes? What is it?"

But Maynard didn't know what it was. A curious shyness warmed his face. He shut his mouth tight. . . . Yet there it was, the abrupt, rather wistful realization that, although he had done and would do everything on earth for the long-jawed, white-haired fellow who was all the kin he had, yet in fact there was no kinship between them. Basil didn't know him; he didn't know Basil. In the same boat since birth, yet strangers; and they were growing old.

"Basil!" They had come to Broadway and paused in an eddy of the crowd. "Basil, old fellow—you and I—where are we going, we two? And why? You see, I've no one to ask but you; and suddenly, to-day, I want to know."

"Where are we *going?* Why, around the block."

"I don't mean that, Basil."

Basil removed his new silk hat and scratched his head. In his blue eyes, at once clever and singularly unadult, there was a proprietory concern and a complete uncomprehension. However, he grinned.

"Going, eh? We're going down to City Hall, that's where. The 'why' we can leave till we get there. . . . You're all right now; come on back to the gang. Brace up, Mr. Mayor; be yourself."

The half-sanguine color left Maynard's face, and it was bloodless again.

"Very well, lead on. The crowd is thick."

Basil led the way back around the corner into the quieter side-street. Maynard didn't follow. Once free of the other's sight, he stepped beyond a first knot of idlers, then a second. His heart pounding and his legs stiff, he crossed the street and held up his cane to a cruising taxicab.

"Over there, somewhere. Just go; I'll tell you when to stop."

From that moment Maynard Ross ceased to be his own man. In innocence, but of his own act, he had surrendered himself into the hands of an abstruse conspiracy. Thereafter he walked as he was bidden, each step ordained.

The taxi driver, an ex-convict with thick brows and mild eyes, was party to it. Maynard didn't guess this; neither did the man himself. But he had arrived precisely at Eighth Avenue and Twenty-fourth Street at the moment when his fare rapped on the glass and, when he drew in to the curb, the machine was so faced that a man alighting from it would walk inevitably west.

Maynard walked west, without knowing or caring, his eyes on the ground. His thoughts raced, but without logical sequence. He wasn't used to taking brandy. But it wasn't the brandy. No, no.

Colors, sounds, smells, more than anything else, shaped his meditations. Snow fell again, dimming the house-fronts. Somewhere a Russian was singing a wild, brutal, melancholy Cossack song. And Maynard thought, "How long is it since I've been allowed to be alone?" It seemed an age. A mutinous exultation rose in him, almost an impish glee. He began to lift his feet from the shining sidewalk as if their tightly buttoned spats had turned to wings.

But then, passing an open door where men idled, he heard one of them exclaiming, "There's nothing to it, this guy Maynard Ross is elected; you wait. He's the goods too, you watch. He's dependable. He's always right there." It caught Maynard. It was just as if the hand of the truant officer had grabbed him by the slack of the jacket, from behind. And he protested, "But I'm going back directly. Yes, I know,

they must be scandalized and worried crazy. Yes, yes, here I go. The first taxi I see now I'll take. . . ."

But then again, in the flaky air, there was a new fragrance, that was half old, and half a stench; a wraith of uneasiness. Slime and salt-pickled timbers, smoke that was not factory smoke, tar, and the scavenger-smell of the tides that follow the moon. He was lost, and the thought . . .

But, no! A moving blur of yellow; a taxi eastward bound. Fetched back to his senses, he called and waved both arms.

But once more, no. That one wasn't in the "frame-up" and didn't hear. The implement of Fate was bearing down from the other direction even now, incorruptibly punctual—and yesterday other implements had been laying telephone conduits just here and had left a transverse bump.

The motor truck came at a rush, high as a house, too close for comfort to Maynard on the curb. That bump. A bang and clatter. An oath. And a bundle end-over-end through the air and into the gutter at Maynard's feet.

He retrieved it and hurried in the direction of the truck's flight, or at least in the fancied direction, for it was already gone in the snowy fog. He didn't stop to think. He didn't need to; it was all ordained.

He came to the doors of a ferry-house. Vehicles crowded there, but for the moment he didn't see the motor truck; people crowded too, and with the sense of their haste added to his own he grew confused. He stood and studied his burden, hoping for a clue. Wrapped in yellow paper and tied with thick twine, it bore the label of an express company, and it was addressed to Mayne Ross.

"Mayne Ross, Broadview Terrace, Moorchurch, N. J."

A dray driver was yelling at him to move aside. He didn't hear.

"*Mayne* Ross!" Of all things! "*Mayne!*"

The drayman grew hoarse. A man in blue took his elbow and shifted him, saying moodily, "In *that* way is where you want."

"But I—I was looking for—" Maynard held out the bundle. The bluecoat examined the address, sighed, thrust the elderly innocent into the thick of the passenger entrance, and said, "I told you in that way, didn't I?"

The crowd took Maynard and left him at length in a boat of many windows, seated on a bench between two fat young men. He got out his handkerchief and wiped his glasses; then he mopped a little cleaner the place on the bundle where the address was.

"*Mayne!*" When he was a boy they used to call him that, but he hadn't been a boy for a long, long time. And now, with the exception of Basil perhaps, who in the world—"*Mayne!*" It was funny; if it had been frankly "Maynard" he would have taken it for a coincidence.

He got up, walked out of the boat of windows, and came to a waist-high rail. At a distance below him brown water swirled and turned white; the ferryboat had reached midstream. He looked to the left and saw Manhattan, from the outside. The snow, turning sleet again, blurred the peaked outlines and drew it together, compact and whole. Twice in Maynard's life he had made an adventurous decision, and got nowhere either time. To-day he had drifted—and behold him!

Moment by moment the pile of wood and iron and glass and stone that had been the world of nearly sixty years lessened and dimmed; another moment and it would be no more than a shadowy lump behind the watery hangings. Time shrank; the illusion of speed was enormous; the sense of sundering was magnified. He turned his eyes with a jerk the other way.

In the west the gelid rain was touched by a hidden light; rare millions of the falling drops flashed facets of ruby red or the warm salmon-pink of opals. On the jeweled curtain reared the silhouette of the city of other men. It might have

been the City of the Moon. "The *Jersey Side!*" Maynard remembered the epithet of another morning. The innocence of the scorn of youth! Good God!

He wasn't a youth any longer; this wasn't the sort of thing for a man of his years to be doing. He decided that. And then the crowd, at disembarkation, caught him and confused him again and the hirelings of the conspiracy were everywhere. They glanced at his bundle, shunted him this way, that way, and put him on a train.

Objects alien and enormous flitted across the window-square, behemoths cubical and smoke-breathing, gesticulating iron skeletons, fusilades of little houses all alike, and all limned in brightness of a sudden where the rain ceased and let the sunset come in level from the west.

"What in the name of insanity am *I* doing *here?*"

But deeper than this half-pusillanimous bewilderment in him was his curiosity. And he was on his first railway train, and he was profoundly thrilled. And immaculately alone. He was known to everyone about him in the crowded coach, but not one of them knew him with his hat pulled down.

A cog in the machine of conspiracy opened a door and yelled "Moor*church*, *Moooor*church*!*" Another was on the station platform. "Cab, sir? Cab?"

"I want to go to Broadway Terrace."

The fellow shook his head. "No such place in *this* town."

"There is. There must be. Else how could Mayne Ross . . ."

"Oh! Mayne Ross. Yes, I know where that is. Get right in."

The cab was a sedan and the driver was talkative. "Mayne, eh? I thought I heard Mayne was down the east shore again, gunnin'."

"As to that I couldn't say."

"Well this is as far's I can take you, Mister. Half-dollar, please. Now you see that lane there; follow that down and the path'll take you."

The lane was an alley, leading down between two of the file of bungalows that made the standardized suburban street. On the board fence, near its entrance, a small placard was tacked, with a pointing hand drawn in ink above a printed "Mayne Ross." Maynard followed its advice. No more had the path arrived at its bottom, where the house yards ended, than it began to climb again in the open space beyond.

"Broadview Terrace" had been christened for one purpose and one only, so that absentee investors might buy lots. Fortunately for the absentees they hadn't bought. Fifty years ago there had been a solitary building there, and the same building was solitary still, a weatherworn structure as simple in its geometry as a shed, facing out from its station on the single rise of land (as symmetrical as a washbowl upside down) across a waste of square miles which not even industrial New Jersey had yet succeeded in reclaiming from the seepage of the tides.

It hadn't succeeded yet, but one day, inevitably, it would. Here and there on the distant other margins it began to encroach by thousands of cartloads of rubbish, infinitesimally. Factories squatted on the gains, little black blocks with toothpick chimneys that smoked. Now the smoke, reaching after and mingling with the wrack of the retreating storm, spread across the sky a broken and heterogeneous cloud, under whose edge in the west the evening glow sent in a striated light. In a pool among the near reeds a solitary, rather bedraggled duck was diving. From another direction and farther off there winged a faint, strident cry. That was a trolley car.

The thing about the house was that it stood dark as enigma in silhouette against the sky. The thing about Maynard's lungs, as he climbed at a creeping pace up the hillock, was that they would take in wind but wouldn't let any out.

At the first he had said, "Well, I'll *be!*" After that he said nothing. But

midway of the ascent he stopped dead and looked at the bundle in his arms. He knew it. And he knew that somehow he had at least half known it from the moment he bent to pick it up. Now he slipped the twine off, ripped the paper, and took the goose out by its legs. And so, starting on again, he carried it.

A figure for comedy. An elderly gentleman with rimless spectacles, the hat precisely upright on his thinning mouse-gray hair, his thin gray-trousered legs walking down from the skirts of his gray overcoat to his gray gaiters and shiny mud-specked shoes—grasping a cane in one gray-gloved hand and in the other the legs of a goose that flopped its wings with his every step and bumped its head along the ground. And all this in the unkempt vestige of a marshland, and in a kind of a light of doom.

On the far side of the barrack Maynard found the door. It had six panels and, if they had ever been painted, the sun and rain and wind had long since scoured them clean. The glow from the west was warm and cool at one time, a dilute magenta, like the ray from an ember flaring once as it dies.

When a man comes to a door he raps. Maynard propped his cane against the frame and lifted a fist of knuckles.

"This is idiocy!" He dropped the hand.

He raised it again. It hung there visibly wobbling. . . . Of a sudden he reached out, pressed the iron latch down, and pushed with his weight.

It had never occurred to him to do that before. Neither had it ever entered his calculations that the door might be locked. And it was.

The breath went right out of him. "Well then, so much for *that!*"

Then it came back in again, balloning.

"Mayne!"

The voice was beyond the panels: expectancy, gladness, doubt.

The thing for the man to do was to dump the goose on the doorstep and run as fast as he could. And all he did was stand.

"Is it you, Mayne?"

He heard the bolt withdrawn and saw the door swung back.

He had a better sight of the woman than she had of him, for the light that was at his back shone directly into her eyes.

"It's been long," she said. It was as simple as that, spoken without bitterness or recrimination, a little wistfully perhaps.

She was nearly as tall as he. About the carriage of the head there was a something of unsurrendered dignity. The head itself was massive without being overlarge. Its planes showed the broad adze-work of inclement years; even the hair, the color of granite, seemed to have been shaped about the temples along the lines of the natural cleavage of the rock.

It was the eyes, however, that centered the attention, wide-set, slate-gray eyes of understanding, of acquiescence only in material and unimportant things, of patience carrying through disillusion and out beyond.

For the instant while these eyes remained on his, still misapprehending him, something happened to Maynard Ross that had never happened before and was never perhaps to happen again —he felt himself recognized. A fearful felicity, almost in the same wink come and gone.

"Oh!" she said, "you must pardon me." Seeing her mistake and slightly confused, she blinked the sky glow out of her pupils. And with that he saw that she was old, and that her clothing was old too, shapeless, and not too clean.

"You must pardon me," she repeated. "I thought it was my husband; I was half-expecting him to-day. . . .Is there something you want?"

Maynard held out the gray goose. "I just brought this."

"He sent it?"

"Yes."

"It's the third he has sent now—in place of coming." She took the bird from his hand. She spoke then with the

inflection of a humor extraordinarily pure. "There's not many women hereabouts live as rich as I do—on wild game most every day."

Still Maynard stood.

"Thank you," she said, remembering her manners, her gaze gone over his shoulder to the greening horizon again. Presently she was edging the door shut, but reopened it then with a fling of wild justice, triumphant.

"He loves to go gunning. So, pray, why shouldn't he?"

The night fell swiftly. It was deep dusk when Maynard reached the hollow and nearly full dark when he came to the top of the lane. He stood there with his hand on the fence, for a moment; he felt a little gone.

The placard was just there near his hand. On impulse he scratched a match and bent to read the print. He lighted another and another.

The laughter of the Vagabond. . . .

MAYNE ROSS

Lawns & Gardens Tended
Competent Ship-Carpenter
Swedish & Portuguese Translations
Handy with Ford, Dodge, Chevrolet Engines
Carbon Cleaned
Guns Cleaned & Gunning Parties Conducted
Seven Years with Kranslaen's Circus
Good with Lions & Leopards
Also Elephants
Residence No. 27 Broadview Terrace
Washing Taken in

The street ran down hill toward the east. A man loafing in a gateway cleared his throat amicably as Maynard approached, and mused aloud, "Cleared up wonderfully, hasn't it? I'll say I never expected to see the election signals on the Times—not to-night—from here."

"Where?"

"Why, there."

Above the bottom of the street and across the lower roofs, far off but lambent in the new clear light, wrinkled down for canyons and wrinkled up for pinnacles, the lights of Manhattan hung. Not Bagdad and Babylon rolled in one city was ever so bedizened, so deviously and adventurously peopled, so fabulous.

A thin white ray was sweeping.

"Yeah, look there right now. There's the early count in the first wards. Ross leads . . . Mmmm! Be some fun to be in that guy's shoes to-night, wouldn't it now?"

"*It would!*"

Maynard spoke with a sudden vehemence. As he walked on, the string of jewels blurred and brightened, and tears tumbled down from his eyes.

ON BEING THE RIGHT SIZE

BY J. B. S. HALDANE

THE most obvious differences between different animals are differences of size, but for some reason the zoölogists have paid singularly little attention to them. In a large textbook of zoölogy before me I find no indication that the eagle is larger than the sparrow, or the hippopotamus bigger than the hare, though some grudging admissions are made in the case of the mouse and the whale. But yet it is easy to show that a hare could not be as large as a hippopotamus, or a whale as small as a herring. For every type of animal there is a most convenient size, and a large change in size inevitably carries with it a change of form.

Let us take the most obvious of possible cases, and consider a giant man sixty feet high—about the height of Giant Pope and Giant Pagan in the illustrated *Pilgrim's Progress* of my childhood. These monsters were not only ten times as high as Christian, but ten times as wide and ten times as thick, so that their total weight was a thousand times his, or about eighty to ninety tons. Unfortunately, the cross sections of their bones were only a hundred times those of Christian, so that every square inch of giant bone had to support ten times the weight borne by a square inch of human bone. As the human thigh-bone breaks under about ten times the human weight, Pope and Pagan would have broken their thighs every time they took a step. This was doubtless why they were sitting down in the picture I remember. But it lessens one's respect for Christian and for Jack the Giant Killer.

To turn to zoölogy, suppose that a gazelle, a graceful little creature with long thin legs, is to become large—it will break its bones unless it does one of two things. It may make its legs short and thick, like the rhinoceros, so that every pound of weight has still about the same area of bone to support it. Or it can compress its body and stretch out its legs obliquely to gain stability like the giraffe. I mention these two beasts because they happen to belong to the same order as the gazelle, and both are quite successful mechanically, being remarkably fast runners.

Gravity, a mere nuisance to Christian, was a terror to Pope, Pagan, and Despair. To the mouse and any smaller animal it presents practically no dangers. You can drop a mouse down a thousand-yard mine shaft and, on arriving at the bottom, it gets a slight shock and walks away. A rat is killed, a man is broken, a horse splashes. For the resistance presented to movement by the air is proportional to the surface of the moving object. Divide an animal's length, breadth, and height each by ten; its weight is reduced to a thousandth, but its surface only to a hundredth. So the resistance to falling in the case of the small animal is relatively ten times the driving force.

An insect, therefore, is not afraid of gravity; it can fall without danger, and can cling to the ceiling with remarkably little trouble. It can go in for elegant fantastic forms of support like that of the daddy-long-legs. But there is a force which is as formidable to an insect

as gravitation to a mammal. This is surface tension. A man coming out of a bath carries with him a film of water of about one-fiftieth of an inch in thickness. This weighs about a pound. A wet mouse has to carry about its own weight of water. A wet fly has to lift many times its own weight and, as everyone knows a fly once wetted by water or any other liquid is in a very serious position indeed. An insect going for a drink is in as great danger as a man leaning out over a precipice in search of food. If it once falls into the grip of the surface tension of the water —that is to say, gets wet—it is likely to remain so until it drowns. A few insects, such as water-beetles, contrive to be unwettable; the majority keeps well away from their drink by means of a long proboscis.

Of course tall land animals have other difficulties. They have to pump their blood to greater heights than a man and, therefore, require a larger blood pressure and tougher blood vessels. A great many men die from burst arteries, especially in the brain, and this danger is presumably still greater for an elephant or a giraffe. But animals of all kinds find difficulties in size for the following reason: A typical small animal, say a microscopic worm or rotifer, has a smooth skin through which all the oxygen it requires can soak in, a straight gut with sufficient surface to absorb its food, and a simple kidney. Increase its dimensions tenfold in every direction, and its weight is increased a thousand times so, that if it is to use its muscles as efficiently as its miniature counterpart, it will need a thousand times as much food and oxygen per day and will excrete a thousand time as much of waste products.

Now, if its shape is unaltered its surface will be increased only a hundredfold, and ten times as much oxygen must enter per minute through each square millimeter of skin, ten times as much food through each square millimeter of intestine. When a limit is reached to their absorptive powers their surface has to be increased by some special device. For example, a part of the skin may be drawn out into tufts to make gills, or pushed in to make lungs, thus increasing the oxygen-absorbing surface in proportion to the animal's bulk. A man, for example, has a hundred square yards of lung. Similarly the gut, instead of being smooth and straight, becomes coiled and develops a velvety surface, and other organs increase in complication. The higher animals are not larger than the lower because they are more complicated. They are more complicated because they are larger. Just the same is true of plants. The simplest plants such as the green algæ growing in stagnant water or on the bark of trees are mere round cells. The higher plants increase their surface by putting out leaves and roots. Comparative anatomy is largely the story of the struggle to increase surface in proportion to volume.

Some of the methods of increasing the surface are useful up to a point but not capable of a very wide adaptation. For example, while vertebrates carry the oxygen from the gills or lungs all over the body in the blood, insects take air directly to every part of their body by tiny blind tubes called tracheæ which open to the surface at many different points. Now, although by their breathing movements they can renew the air in the outer part of the tracheal system, the oxygen has to penetrate the finer branches by means of diffusion. Gases can diffuse easily through very small distances, not many times larger than the average length traveled by a gas molecule between collisions with other molecules. But when such vast journeys—from the point of view of a molecule—as a quarter of an inch have to be made, the process becomes slow. So the portions of an insect's body more than a quarter of an inch from the air would always be short of oxygen. In consequence hardly any insects are much more than half an inch thick. Land

crabs are built on the same general plan as insects, but are much clumsier. Yet, like ourselves, they carry round oxygen in their blood, and are therefore able to grow far larger than any insect. If the insects had hit on a plan for driving air through their tissues instead of letting it soak in, they might well have become as large as lobsters, though other considerations would have prevented them from becoming as large as man.

Exactly the same difficulties attach to flying. It is an elementary principle of aeronautics that the minimum speed needed to keep an airplane of given shape in the air varies as the square root of its length. If it is four times as big each way it must fly twice as fast. Now the power needed for the minimum speed increases more rapidly than the weight of the machine. Of the two airplanes considered above, the larger weighs sixty-four times as much as the smaller but needs one hundred and twenty-eight times its horsepower to keep up. Applying the same principles to the birds, we find that the limit to their size is soon reached. An angel whose muscles developed no more power weight for weight than those of an eagle or a pigeon would require a breast projecting for about four feet to house the muscles engaged in working its wings, while to economize in weight, its legs would have to be reduced to mere stilts. Actually a large bird such as an eagle or kite does not keep in the air mainly by moving its wings. It is generally to be seen soaring, that is to say balanced on a rising column of air. But even soaring becomes more and more difficult with increasing size. Were this not the case eagles might be as large as tigers and as formidable to man as hostile airplanes.

II

But it is time that we passed to some of the advantages of size. One of the most obvious is that it enables one to keep warm. All warm-blooded animals at rest lose the same amount of heat from a unit area of skin, for which purpose they need a food-supply proportional to their surface and not to their weight. Five thousand mice weigh as much as a man. Their surface and food, or oxygen consumption, are about seventeen times a man's. In fact a mouse eats about one-quarter its own weight of food every day, which is mainly used in keeping it warm. For the same reason small animals cannot live in wild countries. In the arctic regions there are no reptiles or amphibians, and no small mammals. The smallest mammal in Spitzbergen is the fox. The small birds fly away in the winter, while the insects die, though their eggs can survive six months or more of frost. The most successful mammals are bears, seals, and walruses.

Similarly, the eye is a rather inefficient organ until it reaches a large size. The back of the human eye on which an image of the outside world is thrown and which corresponds to the film of a camera, is composed of a mosaic of "rods and cones" whose diameter is little more than the length of an average light wave. Each eye has about half a million, and for two objects to be distinguishable their images must fall on separate rods or cones. It is obvious that with fewer but larger rods and cones we should see less distinctly. If they were twice as broad, two points would have to be twice as far apart before we could distinguish them at a given distance. But if their size were diminished and their number increased we should see no better. For it is impossible to form a definite image smaller than a wave-length of light. Hence a mouse's eye is not a small-scale model of a human eye. Its rods and cones are not much smaller than ours, and therefore there are far fewer of them. A mouse could not distinguish one human face from another six feet away. In order that they should be of any use at all, the eyes of small animals have to be

much larger in proportion to their bodies than our own. Large animals on the other hand require only relatively small eyes, and those of the whale and elephant are little larger than our own.

For rather more recondite reasons the same general principle holds true of the brain. If we compare the brain-weights of a set of very similar animals such as the cat, cheetah, leopard, and tiger, we find that as we quadruple the body-weight the brain-weight is only doubled. The larger animal with proportionately larger bones can economize on brain, eyes, and certain other organs.

III

Such are a very few of the considerations which show that for every type of animal there is an optimum size. Yet although Galileo demonstrated the contrary more than three hundred years ago, people still believe that if a flea were as large as a man it could jump a thousand feet into the air. As a matter of fact the height to which an animal can jump is more nearly independent of its size than proportional to it. A flea can jump about two feet, a man about seven. To jump a given height, if we neglect the resistance of the air, requires an expenditure of energy proportional to the jumper's weight. But if the jumping muscles form a constant fraction of the animal's body, the energy developed per ounce of muscle is independent of the size, provided it can be developed quickly enough in the small animal. As a matter of fact an insect's muscles, although they can contract more quickly than our own, appear to be less efficient, as otherwise a flea or grasshopper could rise six feet into the air.

And just as there is a best size for every animal, so the same is true for every human institution. In the Greek type of democracy all the citizens could listen to a series of orators and vote directly on questions of legislation. Hence their philosophers held that a small city was the largest possible democratic state. The English invention of representative government made a democratic nation possible and the possibility was first realized in the United States, and later elsewhere. With the development of broadcasting it has once more become possible for every citizen to listen to the political views of representative orators, and the future may perhaps see the return of the national state to the Greek form of democracy. Even the referendum has been made possible only by the institution of daily newspapers.

To the biologists the problem of socialism appears largely as a problem of size. The socialists desire to run every nation as a single business concern. I do not suppose that Henry Ford would find much difficulty in running Andorra or Luxembourg on a socialistic basis. He has already more men on his payroll than their population. It is conceivable that a syndicate of Fords, if we could find them, would make Belgium Ltd. or Denmark Inc. pay their way. But while nationalization of certain industries is an obvious possibility in the largest of states, I find it no easier to picture a completely socialized British Empire or United States than an elephant turning somersaults or a hippopotamus jumping a hedge.

WHY I SENT MY CHILDREN AWAY TO SCHOOL

BY EMILY NEWELL BLAIR

WHEN my first child went away to school I was living in a little town of twelve thousand. When my second went I was in another small town of thirty thousand—both in the Middle West; both credited with having "good public schools." Few children in either town went away to school at such an early age—fourteen in one case, fifteen in the other.

Naturally, since anything "different" is viewed with alarm, I came in for much criticism. I have lost count of the number of times fond mothers have said to me, "I could not give up *my* child, she means too much to me," or, "I think children need the home influence at that age." Only the other day a father said to me, "I care too much for my boy. I could not stand having him go so far away."

Naturally, too, since I am not doubt proof, these and other remarks have given me moments of unhappiness and I have wondered if, after all, I were doing the right thing, if I were needlessly sacrificing the pleasure of the children's companionship.

But now my children are both through preparatory school. One is half way through college, the other entered last fall. I had them at home with me last summer. I could compare them with other children whose parents could not "give them up" as well as with those who have had the "home influence" through those vital formative years. And I am ready now to report whether it has paid or not.

My daughter was fourteen the year we entered the war. She had had one year in high school. She had passed all her subjects. She was promoted to the second year. Not that she got brilliant grades. She did not. But she was "getting by" without much trouble. This was the rub—"without much trouble." She was not a student. When I taxed her with this she gave me the answer that she "had passed." This seemed to be the beginning and end of her intellectual ambition—"to pass."

Yet she was keenly alive to everything that went on outside of school. There was hardly a person in our town not on her nodding list. And, what was more, she knew all there was to know about them, some of the information worth while, but most of it mere gossip.

We had a good high school as high schools go. I say "as high schools go," for I realize that a high school is a public school to take care of all children. This necessarily means that it is designed to take care of the average child; and this means again that its requirements must be adapted to the ability of the average child. What do I mean by that? One of my friends was preparing her boy for Williams College. She had informed herself as to the entrance requirements and was following her son closely in the required subjects. The first year in high school she found that he did not cover the amount of Latin required. It was in the course but they didn't get through with it. She approached the teacher in regard to the matter. "We can't do

it, Mrs. Blank," she was informed. "I cannot push the fifty pupils in my first-year class that fast. I'm sorry, but it can't be done."

"But why don't you flunk out those who can't keep up?" the mother asked.

"Because that would not be fair," the teacher answered. "I cannot set a standard in a public school that would eliminate half my class the first session."

Again the mother protested. "But why not, if they cannot do the work?"

"They can do it after a fashion. I set an average, I do flunk many. But I have no right to set a standard that would eliminate half."

Somewhat the same experience the mother had with his English teacher. "I want you to grade Joseph just as you would if you were teaching in one of those stiff preparatory schools. I don't care what you do to the other children. Grade Joseph very closely."

Again she met a protest. "But I cannot do that. It would not be right. I cannot set a standard for Joseph and another for the rest. I am preparing public-school children, the larger proportion of whom will never go to any college. The few that do will go to the State University that must articulate with us. I cannot set a Williams College standard."

II

I do not mean for an instant to claim that my child or my friend's son was better than the average child. They probably did their part towards pulling down that standard. I merely say that if you want to hold them up to the standard set by college requirements it is difficult to do so in the public schools.

My children were experts in the art of bluffing. I don't know whether they came by it naturally or learned its efficacy in the public school. When they entered the First Grade they could read after a fashion, having picked it up from their picture books. During the first three years at school they had hardly a story told them or a subject discussed that they had not previously covered at home. They had traveled in this country. They had heard their father and me discuss visits to New York and Washington and California. They soon found that they could give out this information in such a way as to produce an impression of doing good school work without ever looking into a school book. Having learned the trick, they kept it up in later years. To discuss history from the vantage point of historical novels was much easier than making outlines and giving authorities. And they did the former.

I am not criticizing their teachers; please understand that. I have been a public school-teacher myself. I take my hat off to teachers. But when a teacher has a class of thirty-five or fifty, she is very likely to mistake a superficial ability to talk for actual information.

Nor was it the teacher's fault that she selected the same books that I had read to my children long before they went to school. If she did not, where would these other children ever read them? The public school is for all children. Not that I claim that my children have had remarkable advantages or have come out of an intellectual home. Not at all. I read to my children only what most of my friends read to theirs; but their children and mine together were but a small proportion of the children in our town who attended public school.

But the fact that my child had already gone over so much of the ground covered in the first few grades ruined completely any power of concentration she might have had. While her teacher was reading and the others were studying, her mind wandered about in search of something more interesting. By the time she reached high school she could not concentrate; and I knew it would be too late for her to reform these mental habits if she waited until she went to college to correct them.

What was more, I doubted if she could ever enter college unless she began

to learn a few of the things in the books. I realized that she could not bluff college examinations. But her bluffing was not "called" by high-school examinations. Latin, of course, and irregular German verbs you might have thought it difficult to bluff. But in a Latin class of forty the student is called upon but once or twice a week. She can estimate to a degree of probability just which day it will be. If her name begins with B she gets up the first and the last part of the lesson. Or, if the teacher calls on them as they sit, she fortifies herself accordingly.

I knew one very brilliant girl who took second honors at her graduation from a public high school, receiving an average of ninety-five per cent for four-years work. She had every reason to think that she had met the standard; but when she took her College Boards she flunked. She had had no experience in taking examinations. A boy graduated from a Chicago high school in high standing and failed in his Latin College entrance examination. Too large a class, he explained; it was never checked up by examinations.

Once again I say it is not the teacher's fault. She is not preparing for College Boards.

One of my young friends entered an Eastern college. By dint of much tutoring he had passed his College Boards. He told me that throughout his college life he had just managed to keep up. "I'm a good student," he said. "I like to study. I might have made a brilliant record if I had come prepared."

That was the cry of all the boys and girls who went from our town to first-class colleges. "If we'd only learned how to study." "I never knew what studying was until I came to college." "I lose all the fun of college because I have to work so hard to keep up."

What chance, thought I, will my little bluffer have when she finds out what real study is?

What I wanted for my daughter was an education, not a diploma. And I began to fear she would never get it from the high school.

Many children who go through high school are "educated." Some go no farther and are "educated." Some go from high school to the best of colleges and make their mark. If a child wants an education, if he or she is mentally hungry and has the qualities of a scholar, there is food for him at the high school and, if his teacher discovers him, rare sympathy and help.

But there are not many such children in high school or out. Most children have to be taught, led, developed, their weak spots strengthened, their strong ones disciplined. My discovery was that, so far as my children were concerned, the high school was not doing this for them.

I have known cases where the mother or the father did all that, using the high school as equipment. If a parent is prepared to do so and is able to order his hours accordingly, well and good. But some of us are wives as well as mothers, housekeepers as well as wives, have younger children or other duties.

III

And this brings me to my second reason for sending my daughter away to school. I was not satisfied that our home *was* the best place for her. Now I had a delightful home, pretty, neat, well run, and happy. In our family were my husband and my son, four years younger than my daughter. My husband was a busy man. His dinner hour varied from six to seven-thirty. He had insomnia and rose any time from seven to nine. He worked very hard. I confess that the home was run for his convenience. When he came home I rushed to serve him. The evenings were his.

The boy was just enough younger to have no sympathy with his sister, to require a totally different treatment and a different schedule of hours.

Yet I realized that then, if ever, my

daughter must live a regular life with regular hours and must be made to feel that her studies were her business in life, just as the office was my husband's and my housekeeping was mine. She did not fit easily into any scheme. I could not lay down a regime and know it would be followed. I should have to be proctor; and I knew I should not be and that sooner or later she would be fitting herself into our life "hit or miss."

Also, she had reached the "difficult" age when she knew better than I what she should do. She was socially inclined. There were many invitations to parties. There were "beaux." She yearned for high-heeled shoes and dresses in the extreme of style.

I began, as most of us mothers do, to say that my daughter should not do thus and so. She could not go to picture shows with boys. She could go to the parties only on Friday nights. I would come for her at the parties. And she did the usual thing. She said she preferred staying at home to being "different" from all the rest. If she couldn't have a silk dress made with ruffles and frills she would wear an old one.

I recalled my own youth. I remembered how terrible it was to be "different." And I knew that I should have to do one of two things: I should have to let her do what the girls about her did or give her other companionship. I should have to conform to custom or change the surroundings. Above all things, I didn't want her to grow up feeling "queer"—with an inferiority complex as we call it now.

So it was decided. She was to go away to school. Then when she was at home she could do these things for the short vacation period. We would divide the business and the pleasure, the school and the home, into two entirely separate compartments.

It was the wisest decision of my life. We were not friends, my daughter and I. I know it now but I did not realize it then. For, being together, we had drifted into antagonism and dislike without knowing it. She resented me. I disapproved of her. I balked her every wish. I stood to her for authority. I was "queer," I was "mean," I didn't want her to have a good time.

Then she watched me get her ready for school. She saw the thought and time I put into the preparations—yes, and the sacrifice. I pity from my heart those parents who have so much that they need never sacrifice for their children, for the right kind of children are won quicker by that than anything else in the world. She went away and knew homesickness until the home she had scorned became a heaven of love. She idealized it. It became a sanctuary instead of a workhouse. She came into contact with grown women, women who won her respect, women whom it was "the thing" to respect, women whose smile was regarded as an honor by the other girls—for that is what her teachers were to her. She was in an environment where grown women set the standards and determined the atmosphere, not girls. She became friends with some of these women. Do you realize how many girls grow up never knowing intimately any other woman except their busy and sometimes uncongenial mother? It dawned on her that her mother, her queer mother, was like these women she respected. A different note crept into her letters to her.

Going away to school gave her back her home and her mother, not as workroom and mentor, but as haven and confidant.

She found herself too in a place designed entirely for her needs and for her work. She was not an incident to be crowded in between planning meals, serving them, and entertaining Dad. Her study period was not suddenly remembered at eight, nor was she thrust out of a gay company into a dining room by herself. The daily routine provided for her study; she was the reason for the whole institution.

She was like a flower planted in a garden with other flowers, each in its

place, with soil and water and sunshine and air, each at the right time in the right way. She grew. It is not for her mother to praise her. I can only say that she did grow in mental and moral stature; that she did enter college; and that to-day when I look at her I have my reward for any sacrifice of companionship or of those creature comforts which I gave up to pay for it.

IV

Of course I chose my school carefully. It was not a finishing school, nor a provincial half-baked school—of which there are legion. It was a school of about a hundred boarding pupils, with a reputation for fine scholarship, some traditions, beautiful old buildings, a rather strict, religious atmosphere; with teachers who were both students and ladies. I cannot enumerate everything that she got from it. Perhaps I do not know. But two things it gave her that are worth all it cost: It killed outright every trace of the provincialism with which she was well overgrown when she went. She is a citizen of the United States, almost of the world, and only incidentally of the locality where she happens now to reside. She gained also that rare thing: appreciation of scholarship, of accuracy, of thoroughness. She scorns superficiality. She values standards. In addition she has learned to do team work, even group work, has won, in short, a social sense. These things I could never have given her at home, strive as I would.

It was not a fashionable school, but it was a good school. I am amazed at the nonchalant way some mothers choose a school for their daughters. Their friends are going to it, they've heard about it, or something like that. I knew one mother who chose the school for its bathrooms and then found after her daughter graduated that it did not prepare for college. And another, with enough money to choose the best, selected a superficial, vulgar finishing school, which told her it was preparing her daughter for college and taught her only how to dress and how to smoke and drink. (I don't mean that the school taught these things, but that she learned them there.)

It would seem easy for mothers to inform themselves about the kinds of schools that are available. They can be sorted into four groups and it is rather easy to place each school in its proper group. One group is composed of those schools that are frankly finishing schools and really finish. They prepare daughters of rich men to take the places in society that their wealth gives them. This preparation includes thorough grounding in academic studies, as well as training in various kinds of sports. They study music and art. Their teachers are college bred. Their standards are high. The girls work. When they are through they are accomplished and efficient. These schools are very expensive and doubtless exclusive. But I often wonder why more of the Middle Western oil millionaires who really want their daughters "finished" do not seek them instead of the "halls" and the "seminaries" and other superficial ones which their daughters now crowd.

The second group is composed of the expensive preparatory schools with long waiting lists, whose students are as rich as those who attend the first group and belong to it socially but who want to go to college. These girls too work, and their simplicity would amaze some of the girls from Western high-school sororities.

The third group is composed of those schools that are so-called finishing schools but really are young ladies' clubs. They make the girls a bit more vulgar, a bit more spoiled, a bit more silly. The pity is that so many of their students enter them under the impression that they are going to schools of the first class. Some of them do give something but usually they leave the student with false values.

My daughter's school was in the fourth group of thorough, honest, plain

schools where scholarship and breeding are held equally in importance. There are many of these in the country. Their success depends upon the women at their head.

In each group there are different grades, higher prices not always indicating higher quality.

I would not wish to seem to say that all girls should go away to school. It might not have done for all girls what it did for mine. Each girl is an individual problem. Yet when mothers ask me, as they often do, what I think about sending girls away from home to school, I can only offer my own experience.

V

And what about my son?

My son is as different from my daughter as one child can be from another. He has never relinquished for a day the idea that Mother and Father are good authorities on almost everything. He did not care at all for girls. His friends happened to be ambitious studious fellows who ought to have been an incentive to him to do good work. Without going away to school, they have entered universities and, although the entrance requirements to these universities are not very high, they are making excellent records.

Why then, you may well ask, did I send him away just at the time when he would seem most to need a home atmosphere?

Because for one thing he was a "smearer." I mean by this that he was content to hit the high places in his studies and let it go at that. He needed discipline in thoroughness. So long as he succeeded—and he did succeed—in getting good grades without thoroughness he would continue to smear. I wanted him to go to some place where he would find smearing unprofitable. I wanted him to go to some place where he must work or find himself classed as an undesirable. In other words, I wanted him to be where the scholarly virtues of thoroughness and application take precedence of the commercial one of "getting there" no matter what the process. I found he had worked out a very practical theory: that it was foolish to do any more work than was necessary to get by. If sixty was a passing grade, why spend any time getting ninety? If forty lines a day of Latin would get you a grade of sixty, only stupid boys would learn the entire fifty. I remember his wail of astonishment after he went away to school. "Why, they flunk you if you haven't got the last ten lines! They say a lesson is a lesson and you must get it all."

He was ingenious and could think of a dozen ways to divert his teacher from his work. He was an interesting talker and informed on many matters. He could always interest the class. One of his instructors at his private school said to me, "It took me just about three days to discover that all that interesting talk about politics was to divert me from his French." And again, "He is interested in everything except mastering a job."

It was no fault of his public-school teachers. Their classes, too, were large. He answered when called upon. How could they know he was just skimming through? But I knew and it worried me. He had a good mind and he was ruining it. He had the possibilities of a scholar and was becoming imbued with the idea that nothing counted but your rating.

And one other thing. He thought that our town was the center of the universe and that the world had been created just so that he might parade through this town.

This is a common enough disease of boys at that age, but I have seen too many who never outgrew it. The country is crowded with them. It is what threatens to make our country an aggregation of small ponds containing big fish. I wanted him to realize the smallness of this pond and the bigness of the world and his place in it. I wanted him to love his own pond but to measure

himself by the ocean and not that particular pond. I wanted him to be able to take a place in the ocean itself if occasion arose.

So I sent him too away to school. But I chose for him a hard school. No pampering, no coddling, no nonsense. He had to work or fail. I knew he would never fail. It was a school where work and character counted—a large school where he would take his measure against many boys of all conditions from all parts of the country. It was what you could do, not who you were, that counted.

Wasn't I afraid, my friends ask, to send him away from home so young? He was fifteen. Now I know that most parents will disagree with me. But I believe that home has done its best for a boy by the time he is fifteen and that after that it often does its worst. If it has done its duty, it has given him his foundation of character, his ideals, his standards. It is now time for him to test them out. They are not tried out in the home. They may have been in the old-fashioned home where a large family was organized like a miniature social organism. But in a modern home, with two or perhaps three children of widely separated ages, it is very different. Such a home may be a nursery, a garden, but it cannot be a microcosm in which the social virtues may be developed or the ideals and standards having to do with social intercourse tried out. One may claim that the public school offers this try-out. In some sense it does. But between the school and this home is a hiatus, the home often undoing what the school does. For instance, take this very matter of the enlarged ego of the boy. The whole teaching of the school life is to minimize it, to show the boy the value of team work, of mutual give and take, of fair adjustment between selfishness and altruism, but all the while at home the boy is the center of everything; conversation, plans—all revolve around him; what he likes and what he wants come first and, even if the parents endeavor to follow up the school teaching, how can they do it? Ignore the boy in the home, overlook him, put him in his place? This does not work. Either the boy knows that it is all forced for a purpose or he thinks it shows lack of sympathy on the part of parents, and this widens a gap of misunderstanding between him and them. The truth is that the modern home cannot produce artificially what the old-fashioned home produced naturally—the discipline that comes from many people acting and reacting on one another.

This is the cause of much of the present lack of discipline by parents. In the old days the father was the head of an institution. In order to maintain that institution there must be some central authority, and there was recognition on the part of the members of the necessity for that authority, if only for their own protection against one another. Justice was what they wanted, and not "understanding." There was also the discipline that comes from the necessity for sacrifice and denial. Since the father of a large family must not show favoritism, since he cannot satisfy the desires of all, demands are not made upon him.

How different in the small modern family of one or two children! The father can give what the child wants if he so desires, and the child knows it. When the father refuses on the ground that it will not be good for the child, the child, not agreeing, considers it stinginess; the effect on the child is not at all the same as it was in the old-fashioned home.

Take the case of the rich parent who thinks denial good for a child. He says his boy shall not have a car. The boy knows that his father can well afford the car. Why should he not have it? He regards the denial as an unnatural autocratic act on the part of his parent. If, on the other hand, there were six children he would know that they could not each have a car. If it was a joint car

each child would see that the other did not abuse the car or the privilege of having it. The problem would solve itself.

There could not be such intimacy between ten children and one parent as there can between one child and one parent. So the parent to-day knows his child, sympathizes with him, understands him, becomes his chum and playmate. It is rather difficult to interrupt this relationship suddenly in order to become judge, jury, and executioner as in the old days. And if a parent, as many of them do, feeling the necessity of discipline, tries autocratically to lay down laws and the punishment thereof, the one child of to-day, feeling that his father should understand, resents it, as one of ten children who regarded his father only as patriarch did not.

The other day a friend of mine whipped his boy for disobedience. The boy looked him in the eye when it was over and said, "Well, you are bigger. You *can* do it, can't you?" It would never have occurred to the boy of the sixties to say that, because his father was Parent, symbol of authority. This boy's father was his chum.

It seems to me that to expect a boy to test out standards and ideals that are meant for a socially organized world in a home of one or two children is like expecting a boy to learn how to be a useful citizen on a desert island. Until we have solved these problems that the modern small family produces, the private school seems to me to meet the need.

VI

There will come up one more objection against the private school. That is the charge of snobbishness. "I think a boy in this country should go to public school so that he will meet all kinds of boys and know his fellow citizens," said one parent to me. "How can he expect to work with them if he does not?"

One of my reasons for sending my boy away to school was just that the public school stimulates snobbishness. There is a lot of bunk about the equality practiced on the public-school ground. My boy may have known many boys whose parents I did not, but if so he never mentioned them, he never brought them home or went to their houses, or played with them elsewhere. He had a small circle of friends always. He was bound to them not through congeniality of tastes or mutality of aims, but because their fathers belonged to the same commercial group. The "standing of boys" at public schools in small towns is determined by the business rating, the financial standing of fathers. Make no mistake about that, parents.

My boy was learning to measure worth by just such standards. He would ask me, "What is his father worth?" "Who ranks him in the bank?" "Is he important?"

Be sure I did not choose for him one of those exclusive schools where he would have found the same standards. I chose a school through which many boys were working their way, a "one price" school where your social standing and your financial standing mean nothing but your scholarship and your school standing mean everything. He found there the sons of generals and country grocers, the sons of ambassadors and New England farmers, the sons of millionaires and barbers, each standing on his own feet. And he made friends —as he never would have done at public school—with boys who were heirs to millions and heirs to horny hands alike. He learned values in human beings. There is no more democratic institution in the country to-day than such a private school. He learned to appreciate the only true aristocracy, that of brains and character.

VII

Do not think that the school career of either of my children was always satisfactory. There were things I did not like about both schools. There were

times when I wondered if I had made the best choice. But as I look back now on the whole experience, as I compare the way my children regard our home as their playground and haven, instead of as the combination dormitory and penal institution which the home of many young people to-day is to them; the way they look at their parents as their best friends whom they can never repay for the sacrifices made for them, instead as the half-despots and half-victims that the parents of many of their friends appear to be to them; the way they look at the world as a large place in which they may find their niche, instead of as a small pond to splash in; the way they regard their fellows as co-partners in a great experiment, instead of as small fish which it is sport to gobble up, I am satisfied. To be perfectly honest I must confess, too, that it did not minimize my satisfaction to have a septuagenarian say to me, "I saw your daughter the other day. She is absolutely the loveliest girl I've ever met. She is so thoughtful, so gentle, so beautiful, so interesting. How did she happen in this day and age?"—nor to hear that one of my erstwhile critics had remarked. "Well, you can't deny that her children have turned out remarkably well in spite of the fact that she sent them away to school so young."

IN THE DARK

BY A. A. MILNE

I'VE had my supper,
And had *my supper,*
And HAD my supper and all:
I've heard the story
Of Cinderella,
And how she went to the ball;
I've cleaned my teeth,
And I've said my prayers,
And I've cleaned and said them right;
And they've all of them been
And kissed me lots,
They've all of them said "Good-night."

So—here I am in the dark alone,
There's nobody here to see;
I think to myself,
I play to myself,
And nobody knows what I say to myself;
Here I am in the dark alone,
What is it going to be?
I can think whatever I like to think,
I can play whatever I like to play,
I can laugh whatever I like to laugh,
There's nobody here but me.
I'm talking to a rabbit . . .
I'm talking to the sun . . .
I think I am a hundred . . .
I'm one.
I'm lying in a forest . . .
I'm lying in a cave . . .
I'm talking to a Dragon . . .
I'm BRAVE.
I'm lying on my left side . . .
I'm lying on my right . . .
I'll play a lot to-morrow . . .
. . . . . .
I'll think a lot to-morrow . . .
. . . . . .
I'll laugh . . .
a lot . . .
to-morrow . . .

(Heigh-ho!)

Good-night.

FREEDOM IN SOCIETY

BY BERTRAND RUSSELL

TO WHAT extent is freedom possible, and to what extent is it desirable among human beings who live in communities? That is the general problem which I wish to discuss.

Perhaps it will be well to begin with definitions. "Freedom" is a term which is used in many senses, and we must decide upon one of them before we can argue profitably. "Society" is less ambiguous, but here, too, some attempt at definition may not be amiss.

"Freedom" in its most abstract sense means the absence of external obstacles to the realization of desires. Taken in this abstract sense, freedom may be increased either by maximizing power or by minimizing wants. An insect which lives for a few days and then dies of cold may have perfect freedom according to the definition, since the cold may alter its desires so that there is no moment when it wishes to achieve the impossible. Among human beings also this way of reaching freedom is possible. A young Russian aristocrat who had become a communist and a Red Army Commissar explained to me that the English do not, like the Russians, need a physical strait jacket, because they have a mental one: their souls are always in strait jackets. Probably there is some truth in this. The people in Dostoevsky's novels are no doubt not quite like real Russians, but at any rate they are people whom only a Russian could have invented. They have all sorts of strange violent desires, from which the average Englishman is free, at least so far as his conscious life is concerned. It is obvious that a community who all wish to murder one another cannot be so free as a community with more peaceable desires. Modification of desire may, therefore, involve just as great a gain to freedom as increase of power.

This consideration illustrates a necessity which is not always satisfied by political thinking: I mean the necessity of what may be called "psychological dynamics." It has been far too common to accept human nature as a datum in politics, to which external conditions have to be adapted. The truth is, of course, that external conditions modify human nature, and that harmony between the two is to be sought by a mutual interaction. A man taken from one environment and plunged suddenly into another may be by no means free, and yet the new environment may give freedom to those accustomed to it. We cannot, therefore, deal with freedom without taking account of the possibility of variable desires owing to changing environment. In some cases this makes the attainment of freedom more difficult, since a new environment, while satisfying old desires, may generate new ones which it cannot satisfy. This possibility is illustrated by the psychological effects of industrialism, which generates a host of new wants: a man may be discontented because he cannot afford a motor car, and soon we shall all want private airplanes. And a man may be discontented because of unconscious wants. For instance, Americans need rest but do not know it. I believe this to be a large part of the explanation of the crime wave in the United States.

Although men's desires vary, there

are certain fundamental needs which may be taken as nearly universal: food, drink, health, clothing, housing, sex, and parenthood are the chief of these. (Clothing and housing are not absolute necessaries in hot climates, but except in the tropics they must be included in the list.) Whatever else may be involved in freedom, certainly no person is free who is deprived of anything in the above list, which constitutes the bare minimum of freedom.

II

This brings us to the definition of "society." It is obvious that the above minimum of freedom can be better secured in a society than by a Robinson Crusoe; indeed, sex and parenthood are essentially social. One may define a "society" as a group of persons who co-operate for certain common purposes. Where human beings are concerned, the most primitive social group is the family. Economic social groups come quite early; apparently groups which co-operate in war are not quite so primitive. In the modern world economics and war are the main motives for social cohesion. Almost all of us are better able to satisfy our physical needs than we should be if we had no larger social unit than the family or the tribe, and in that sense society has served to increase freedom. It is thought, also, that an organized State makes us less likely to be killed by our enemies, but this is a doubtful proposition.

If we take a man's desires as a datum, *i.e.*, if we ignore psychological dynamics, it is obvious that the obstacles to his freedom are of two sorts, physical and social. To take the crudest instance: the earth may not yield enough food for his sustenance, or other people may prevent him from obtaining the food. Society diminishes the physical obstacles to freedom but creates social obstacles. Here, however, we are liable to go wrong through ignoring the effect of society upon desire. One may assume that ants and bees, though they live in well-organized societies, always do spontaneously the things that constitute their social duties. The same is true of most of the individuals among higher animals that are gregarious. According to Rivers, it is true of men in Melanesia. This seems to depend upon a high degree of suggestibility, and upon factors more or less akin to what happens in hypnotism. Men so constituted can co-operate without loss of freedom, and have little need of law. Oddly enough, though civilized men have a far more elaborate social organization than savages have, they appear to be less social in their instincts: the effect of society upon their actions is more external than it is with savages. That is why they discuss the problem of freedom.

I do not, of course, wish to deny that social co-operation has an instinctive basis, even in the most civilized communities. People want to be like their neighbors and to be liked by them; they imitate, and they catch prevalent moods by suggestion. Nevertheless, these factors seem to diminish in strength as men become more civilized. They are much stronger in schoolboys than in adults, and on the whole they have most power over the least intelligent individuals. More and more, social co-operation is coming to depend upon rational apprehension of its advantages, rather than upon what is loosely termed herd instinct. The problem of individual liberty does not arise among savages, because they feel no need of it, but it arises among civilized men with more and more urgency as they become more civilized. And at the same time the part played by government in the regulation of their lives is continually increasing, as it becomes more clear that government can help to liberate us from the physical obstacles to freedom. The problem of freedom in society is therefore one which is likely to increase in urgency, unless we cease to become more civilized.

It is, of course, obvious that freedom

is not to be increased by a mere diminution of government. One man's desires are apt to be incompatible with another man's, so that anarchy means freedom for the strong and slavery for the weak. Without government, the human population of the globe could hardly be a tenth of what it is; it would be kept down by starvation and infant mortality. This would be to substitute a physical slavery far more severe than the worst social slavery to be found in civilized communities in normal times. The problem we have to consider is not how to do without government, but how to secure its advantages with the smallest possible interference with freedom. This means striking a balance between physical and social freedom. To put it crudely: how much more governmental pressure should we be prepared to endure in order to have more food or better health?

The answer to this question, in practice, turns upon a very simple consideration: are we to have the food and health, or is some one else? People in a siege, or in England in 1917, have been found willing to endure any degree of governmental pressure because it was obvious that it was to everyone's advantage. But when one person is to have the governmental pressure and another person is to have the food, the question looks quite different. In this form, we arrive at the issue between capitalism and socialism. Advocates of capitalism are very apt to appeal to the sacred principles of liberty, which are all embodied in one maxim: *The fortunate must not be restrained in the exercise of tyranny over the unfortunate.*

Laissez-faire Liberalism, which was based upon this maxim, must not be confounded with anarchism. It invoked the law to prevent murder and armed insurrection on the part of the unfortunate; as long as it dared, it opposed trade unionism. But given this minimum of government action, it aimed at accomplishing the rest by economic power. Liberalism considered it proper for an employer to say to an employee, "You shall die of hunger," but improper for the employee to retort, "You shall die first, of a bullet." It is obvious that, apart from legal pedantries, it is ridiculous to make a distinction between these two threats. Each equally infringes the elementary minimum of freedom, but not one more than the other. It was not only in the economic sphere that this inequality existed. The sacred principles of liberty were also invoked to justify the tyranny of husbands over wives and fathers over children; but it must be said that liberalism tended to mitigate the first of these. The tyranny of fathers over children, in the form of compelling them to work in factories, was mitigated in spite of the Liberals.

But this is a well-worn theme, and I do not wish to linger on it. I want to pass to the general question: How far should the community interfere with the individual, not for the sake of another individual, but for the sake of the community? And for what objects should it interfere?

I should say, to begin with, that the claim to the bare minimum of freedom—food, drink, health, housing, clothing, sex, and parenthood—should override any other claim. The above minimum is necessary for biological survival, *i.e.*, for the leaving of descendants. The things which I have just enumerated may, therefore, be described as necessaries; what goes beyond them may be called comforts or luxuries according to circumstances. Now I should regard it as *a priori* justifiable to deprive one person of comforts in order to supply another with necessaries. It may not be politically expedient, it may not be economically feasible, in a given community at a given moment; but it is not objectionable on the ground of freedom, because to deprive a man of necessaries is a greater interference with freedom than to prevent him from accumulating superfluities.

But if this is admitted it takes us very

far. Consider health, for instance. In the Borough Council elections now imminent, one of the questions to be decided is the amount of public money to be spent on such matters as public health, maternity care, and infant welfare. Statistics prove that what is spent on these objects has a remarkable effect in saving life. In every Borough in London the well-to-do have banded themselves together to prevent an increase and, if possible, to secure a diminution of the expenditure in these directions. That is to say, they are all prepared to condemn thousands of people to death in order that they themselves may continue to enjoy good dinners and motor cars. As they control almost all the Press, they prevent the facts from being known to their victims. By the methods known to psychoanalysts, they avoid knowing the facts themselves. There is nothing surprising in their action, which is that of all aristocracies in all ages. All that I am concerned to say is that their action cannot be defended on grounds of freedom.

I do not propose to discuss the right to sex and parenthood. I will merely observe that in a country where there is a great excess of one sex over the other, existing institutions seem hardly calculated to secure it; and that the tradition of Christian asceticism has had the unfortunate effect of making people less willing to recognize this right than to recognize the right to food. Politicians, who have not time to become acquainted with human nature, are peculiarly ignorant of the desires that move ordinary men and women. Any political party whose leaders knew a little psychology could sweep the country.

While admitting the abstract right of the community to interfere with its members in order to secure the biological necessaries to all, I cannot admit its right to interfere in matters where what one man possesses is not obtained at the expense of another. I am thinking of such things as opinion and knowledge and art. The fact that the majority of a community dislikes an opinion gives it no right to interfere with those who hold it. And the fact that the majority of a community wishes not to know certain facts gives it no right to imprison those who wish to know them. I know a lady who wrote a long book giving an account of family life in Texas, which I consider sociologically very valuable. The British police hold that no one must know the truth about anything; therefore it is illegal to send this book through the post.

Everybody knows that the patients of psychoanalysts are often cured by the mere process of making them become aware of facts of which they had repressed the recollection. Society is, in certain respects, like these patients but, instead of allowing itself to be cured, it imprisons the doctors who bring unwelcome facts to its notice. This is a wholly undesirable form of interference with freedom.

III

So far I have been considering purely abstract arguments as to the limitations of justifiable interferences with freedom. I come now to certain more psychological considerations.

The obstacles to freedom, as we saw, are of two sorts, social and physical. Given a social and a physical obstacle which cause the same direct loss of liberty, the social obstacle is more harmful, because it causes resentment. If a boy wants to climb a tree and you forbid him, he will be furious; if he finds that he cannot climb it he will acquiesce in the physical impossibility. To prevent resentment it may often be desirable to permit things which are in themselves harmful, such as going to church during an epidemic. To prevent resentment governments attribute misfortunes to natural causes; to create resentment oppositions attribute them to human causes. When the price of bread goes up, governments say it is due to

bad harvests, and oppositions say it is due to profiteers. Under the influence of industrialism people have come to believe more and more in the omnipotence of man; they think there is no limit to what human beings can do to obviate natural misfortunes. Socialism is a form of this belief: we no longer regard poverty as sent by God but as a result of human folly and cruelty. This has naturally altered the attitude of the proletariat towards its "betters." Sometimes the belief in human omnipotence is carried too far. Many Socialists apparently think that under socialism there would be plenty of food for everybody even if the population multiplied until there was only standing room on the earth's surface. This, I am afraid, is an exaggeration. However this may be, the modern belief in the omnipotence of man has increased the resentment when things go wrong, because misfortunes are no longer attributed to God or nature, even when they justly might be. This makes modern communities harder to govern than the communities of the past, and accounts for the fact that the governing classes tend to be exceptionally religious, because they wish to regard the misfortunes of their victims as due to the will of God. It makes interferences with the minimum of freedom harder to justify than in former times, because they cannot be camouflaged as immutable laws, although every day in the newspapers there are letters from clergymen trying to revive this ancient device.

In addition to the fact that interferences with social freedom are resented, there are two other reasons which tend to make them undesirable. The first is that people do not desire the welfare of others, and the second is that they do not know in what it consists. Perhaps, at bottom, these are one and the same, for when we genuinely desire the good of some person we usually succeed in finding out what his needs are. At any rate, the practical results are the same whether people do harm from malevolence or from ignorance. We may therefore take the two together, and say that hardly any man or class can be trusted as the trustee of another's interests. This is, of course, the basis of the argument for democracy. But democracy, in a modern State, has to work through officials, and thus becomes indirect and remote where the individual is concerned. There is a special danger in officials, owing to the fact that they usually sit in offices remote from the people whose lives they control. Take education as a case in point. Teachers, on the whole, from contact with children, have come to understand them and care for them, but they are controlled by officials without practical experience, to whom children may be merely nasty little brats. Therefore, the interferences of officials with freedom for teachers are generally harmful. So in everything: power lies with those who control finance, not with those who know the matter upon which the money is to be spent. Thus the holders of power are too often ignorant or malevolent, and the less they exercise their power the better.

The case for compulsion is strongest where the person compelled gives a moral assent to the compulsion, although, if he could, he would neglect what he recognizes to be his duty. We would all rather pay taxes than have no roads, though if, by a miracle, the tax-collector overlooked us, most of us would not remind him of our existence. And we readily acquiesce in such measures as the prohibition of cocaine, though alcohol is a more dubious proposition. But the best case is that of children. Children must be under authority, and are themselves aware that they must be, although they like to play a game of rebellion at times. The case of children is unique in the fact that those who have authority over them are sometimes fond of them. Where this is the case the children do not resent the authority in general, even when they resist it on particular occasions. Education authorities, as opposed to teachers,

have not this merit and do in fact sacrifice the children to what they consider the good of the State. Authority would be comparatively harmless if it were always in the hands of people who wish well to those whom they control; but there is no known method of securing this result.

Compulsion is at its worst when the victim firmly believes the act commanded to be wicked or harmful. It would be abominable, even if it were possible, to compel a Mahometan to eat pork or a Hindu to eat beef. Anti-vaccinationists ought not to be compelled to be vaccinated. Whether their infant children should be, is another question: I should say not, but the question is not one of freedom, since the child is not consulted in either case. The question is one between the parent and the State, and cannot be decided on any general principle. The parent who has conscientious objections to education is not allowed to keep his child uninstructed; yet, so far as general principles go, the two cases are exactly analogous.

The most important distinction in this matter of freedom is between those goods which one man holds at the expense of another and those in which one man's gain is not another's loss. If I absorb more than my fair share of food some other man goes hungry; if I absorb an unusually large amount of mathematics I do no one any harm. There is another point: such things as food, houses, and clothes are necessaries of life, about the need of which there is not much controversy or much difference between one man and another. Therefore they are suitable for governmental action in a democracy. In all such matters, justice should be the governing principle. In a modern democratic community justice means equality. But it would not mean equality in a community where there was a hierarchy of classes, recognized and accepted by inferiors as well as superiors. Even in modern England, a large majority of wage earners would be shocked if it were suggested that the King should have no more pomp than they have. I should, therefore, define justice as the arrangement producing least envy. This would mean equality in a community free from superstition, but not in one which firmly believed in social inequality.

But in opinion, thought, art, etc., one man's possessions are not obtained at the expense of another's. Moreover, it is doubtful what is good in this sphere. If Dives is having a feast while Lazarus is eating a crust of bread, Dives will be thought a hypocrite if he preaches the advantages of poverty. But if I like mathematics and another man likes music, we do not interfere with each other, and when we praise each other's pursuits we are merely being polite. And in matters of opinion free competition is the only way of arriving at truth. The old Liberal watchwords were applied in the wrong sphere, that of economics; it is in the mental sphere that they really apply. We want free competition in ideas, not in business. The difficulty is that, as free competition in business dies out, the victors more and more seek to use their economic power in the mental and moral sphere, and to insist upon their own idea of right living and right thinking as a condition of being allowed to earn a living. This is unfortunate, since "right living" means hypocrisy and "right thinking" means stupidity.

There is the gravest danger that, whether under plutocracy or under socialism, all mental and moral progress will be rendered impossible by economic persecution. The liberty of the individual should be respected where his actions do not directly, obviously, and indubitably do harm to other people. Otherwise, our persecuting instincts will produce a stereotyped society, as in sixteenth-century Spain. The danger is real and pressing. America is in the van, but we in England are almost sure to follow suit unless we can learn to value freedom in its proper sphere. The free-

dom we should seek is not the right to oppress others but the right to live as we choose and think as we choose where our doing so does not prevent others from doing likewise.

Finally, I want to say a word about what, at the beginning, I called "psychological dynamics." A society where one type of character is common can have more freedom than one in which a different type prevails. A society composed of human beings and tigers could not have much freedom: either the tigers or the human beings must be enslaved. There cannot therefore be any freedom in parts of the world where white men govern colored populations.

To secure the maximum of freedom it is necessary to form character by education, so that men may find their happiness in activities which are not oppressive. This is a matter of formation of character during the first six years of life. Miss McMillan at Deptford is training children who become capable of creating a free community. If her methods were applied to all children, rich and poor, one generation would suffice to solve our social problems. But emphasis on instruction has made all parties blind to what is important in education. In later years desires can only be controlled, not fundamentally altered; therefore, it is in early childhood that the lesson of live-and-let-live must be taught. Given men and women who do not desire the things which can only be secured through the misfortunes of others, the obstacles to social freedom will be at an end.

LOT'S WIFE

BY ELIZABETH MORROW

IF YOU would sing of heroes, sing of her
For she was young and dauntless, unafraid
In Sodom's chaos; nothing could deter
That backward look where beating brimstone played;
Those loyal eyes cost her brief flesh and blood.
Tell us no tale of shame or wickedness
Only how faith and courage at the flood
Became a white and shining loveliness.
So let the gleaming pillar on the plain
Rebuke safe cowards running from the past:
They make no salt beneath a fiery rain,
No savor of their little deeds will last.
But when Lot's wife put on her crystal shroud
The sky saluted and Prometheus bowed!

THE ARROW

A STORY IN TWO PARTS—PART II

BY CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

Author of "Thunder on the Left"

Summary of Part One.—A young American, crossing the Atlantic to attend Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar, was pleasantly stirred by the attractiveness of a girl whom he had first seen on the dock at New York, where she had been wearing a gray dress with what he described to himself as a spinal frill. He had no satisfactory chance to see her on shipboard; his attention was occupied by the strangeness of the sensations of a first ocean voyage. After he reached London—which seemed a sort of fairyland to him—he had a curious experience: passing the statue of Eros in Piccadilly Circus, he suddenly found himself transfixed by an arrow, apparently from the young god's bow. It proved to be invisible to those about him, yet there it was, the point sticking out several inches behind him and the feathered butt projecting an equal distance in front, a little aside of his middle waistcoat button.—*The Editors.*

RETURNED to his hotel, he evaded the talkative doorman and gained the privacy of his chamber. He took off his outer garments, though with some difficulty, and studied his casualty. The arrow had caused no laceration or visible injury; it had pierced him as cleanly as a needle would enter a pudding. He was aware of a warm tickling, a quickening excitement threaded through some inmost node of his being. The unreasonable missile had traversed some region more intimate even than heart or brain or anything palpable. It seemed to be lodged in his very identity, in some surprised and tender essence he could only describe as Me. He tried to break off the projecting ends of the dart; but when he wrenched and twisted, it proved strangely flexible though apparently so glassy and brittle. He backed against the window, hooked the barbed point over the sill, and gave a gigantic heave to pull it out. It was immovable, and the effort only left him dizzy and shaken, with flying volleys of anguish that scattered down every frantic nerve. He desisted and sat for a while almost faint while the chair twirled under him and the delicate engine shone and burned and quivered in his vitals. Now it glowed and sparkled with frolic luster until he was almost proud of so singular a stickpin; now it paled and dwindled until he clutched at his breast to see if it were really there.

He was roused by the dinner gong. Evidently he must make plans to carry on his life with this fantastic inherent. He rang for hot water. When the chambermaid appeared he was standing in his shirtsleeves directly under the light, waiting anxiously to see if she would cry out when she noticed his condition. Chambermaids, he reasoned, are trained to observe anything unusual.

She brought the water, drew the blinds, and turned down the bed, without comment. He stood rotating under the lamp so that she could see him from all angles.

"Chambermaid," he said nervously, "I wonder if you would—"

He hesitated, realizing that someone in the hall might overhear. He closed the door. The maid looked surprised, as his previous conduct in the house had given no suggestion of eccentricity.

He wished he knew her name: it would have made it easier, somehow, to call her Betsy or Maggie.

"My shirt," he said, struggling for an easy familiar tone. "I want you to help me with my shirt."

"It's a pretty pattern, ain't it sir?" she remarked cheerfully. "Oh, you want it mended, don't you. It's torn, what a pity; you must've caught it on a nail."

"Yes, but how about the back?" he asked, turning. "Is that torn too?"

"Oh, Lor', sir, so it is; a nasty little 'ole."

"Is that all?"

"Well, beg pardon, sir, I b'lieve your undervest's tore too, let me . . . ouch!"

She gave a squeak.

"What's the matter?" he cried.

"That's not fair!" she exclaimed angrily, rubbing her plump forearm, evidently puzzled whether this was a practical joke or some new method of beginning a flirtation.

His spirits improved at this evidence of the arrow's invisibility. Keeping at a discreet distance, he suggested that she must have pricked herself on some fastening in her dress.

"All I say is, it's taking a liberty to go shoving pins into people that's trying to be 'elpful."

He pacified her by making a generous offer for the repair of his linen.

"You, see," he explained, "the doctor says I don't get enough ventilation. He wants me to have a little loophole in the front and back of my clothes—then there'll always be a current of air. Now if you'll do that for me, I mean cut out the holes and hem them, I'll give you a pound."

"It'll be blessed draughty with winders cut in your cloes," she said. "You ain't seen a London winter. 'Owever, it's your fun'ral, not mine. A quid? I'll embroider them 'oles proper for a quid."

He went down to dinner somewhat fortified. It was the first time he had taken any meal except breakfast in the hotel, and his arrival agitated the head waiter, a small pallid creature troubled by any sudden decision. He had to stand in full publicity while a table was found for him, but none of the diners noticed any oddity in his outline. If they only knew, he thought.

The places against the wall were all occupied; he must take one in the center of the room; and he discovered that when he sat the butt of the arrow exactly encountered the edge of the board, while the point protruded below the top rail of the open chair-back. He had to sit far out, reaching his food at arm's length: worse still, this brought him dangerously near an adjoining table, where the Bishop was. The head waiter, perpetually anxious about offending someone or inadvertently making some blunder in sedentary precedences, presently approached to push in his seat for him. The American foresaw the maneuver just in time, and leaped to his feet; the servant, very much startled, apologized, wondering what error had been committed. He managed to frame some explanation about a sudden cramp in his foot, and prevented a second attempt on the chair by saying that a leg of the table was in the way. But the waiter, with the timorous obstinacy of his kind, hung about zealously. Already a number of eyes were on them, keen with that specially recognizable disapproval which human beings exhibit when anyone behaves queerly in a dining room. Even the Bishop, who was doing wonders with some sort of steaming jam-roll, looked half-way round.

"It was really damned embarrassing," he told me. "By some accidental recommendation I had fallen into a hotel —or *an* hotel, as they called it—that catered solely to English. A Continental or American visitor was almost unheard

of; most of their patrons, as I noted in the register, had such extravagantly British names as Mrs. Elphin-Elphinstone, The Moated Grange, Monk Hopton, Salop. There was even a Lady in the house, for, turning over the mail on the hall table, I had noted a letter delightfully addressed to Nurse Edwards, care of Lady Smithers; you can hardly guess how unco that seemed to me. As for the Bishop, I don't know that he really was one; I call him so because that was the impression he gave me, but he may have been something even more mysterious, such as a Prebendary. Anyhow, in those first days I had been pleasantly aware of having slipped by good hazard into a pure tissue of England. I had been faced by unfamiliar questions, propounded with sacred solemnity, as when that fool waiter would ask if I wanted thick soup or clear; or my coffee black or white; or sweet or savory? But I had successfully disguised my excitements, happy just not to be noticed. Now this was all ended. The villainy of chance had marked me with a stigma sure to make me grotesque, and not even pitiable because it could not be seen. I wondered desperately, as I carefully conveyed my soup in long trajectory toward my mouth, whether a cube of that solid Yorkshire pudding of theirs could be used as a buffer on the point of my arrow, to prevent the waitress from spearing herself. She was an enthusiastic girl and kept rushing toward the narrow space between my chair and the Bishop's with relays of Brussels sprouts or stewed cheese: and each time I had to turn hurriedly and reach for whatever she brought before she could get behind me.

"In this morbid sharpening of my senses, I'm afraid I may have returned a little resentfully the gazes that came my way. The fact is, I was studying the other guests more closely than before. I envied them their perfect adaptation to the scene, their rich normality, their subconscious certainty that what they were doing was regular and right. They could not possibly have guessed that their fresh gobbling voices, their simultaneous use of knife and fork, the actual food they ate and clothes they wore were all astounding to me: they were happy, bless them, because they were unaware of themselves, just as I had been; their tender psyche was not spitted like an unchloroformed butterfly. I thought bitterly how mad a man is to come abroad, for it makes him sensible of the strangeness of life instead of merging undissenting into it, which is the only peace. But queerer still: as soon as *my* behavior became indecorously odd, as it now unavoidably was, they seemed more cordial. I suppose that in some way the report had gone round that I was an American; well, as long as my demeanor was indistinct from that of any other well-behaved young man they were gently disappointed; but when I showed signs of strangeness it satisfied some vague notion in their minds. And in the oblique profile of the Bishop, as I glanced over my shoulder, I could divine the enigmatic radiation of a man who is about to say something. I watched him apprehensively, and when he pushed his chair back I got hastily to my feet. He seemed surprised at what he can only have thought an excessive courtesy; but he had his cup in his hand and asked me, most charmingly, if he might take coffee at my table.

"I may as well admit that he captivated me at once. I had thought, watching him a few times at breakfast, that there was a certain ludicrous discrepancy between his clean-shaven austerity and the extreme gusto with which he approached his food and his morning *Times*. I could imagine him removing from his mind things in the paper that disagreed with him just as efficiently as he set aside bones in his haddock. But, after all, I don't know why a Bishop shouldn't enjoy his meals as heartily as anyone else. And here he was, the star boarder, in pure goodness of heart taking pains to be gracious to a young alien.

His clear gray eyes were so magnificently direct, it seemed incredible he should not see my gruesome predicament. In pursuit of theological niceties he must have accepted without question many paradoxes just as puzzling as my arrow; but he showed no sign. I yearned to confess my trouble. Who better than a Bishop should be able to understand and console my difficulty? But, curiously, I saw in him the same aversion from surprise, that had made it difficult to appeal to the policeman. I suspected that he was being kind to me on the tacit understanding that I would behave more or less as he expected me to; and I made a resolute attempt to hide my distress. I tucked my napkin over the hole in my waistcoat and welcomed him as courteously as possible.

"'I trust you won't think I'm intruding," he said, 'but I heard you were an American going up to Oxford and, as an old Oxonian myself I wanted to wish you luck. I suppose you are a Rhodes Scholar?'

"I assented.

"'I met a most charming Rhodes Scholar once, also from Ohio,' he continued. (I wish you could have heard his genial pronunciation of the word, equally accenting all three syllables.) 'A fine, manly fellow. It has been an excellent thing for the old varsity to have so many young Americans; you seem to bring us a freshness of outlook, vigorous high spirits that we need.'

"I feared inwardly that he must be disappointed in me as an example of high spirits.

"'I suppose you have already graduated from some American university,' he said. 'I wonder if it could be Princetown? I had a friendly invitation from there at one time, to lecture in the Divinity School. No? Having taken a degree already makes your men a little more mature in some ways than our undergraduates.'

"I explained that I was twenty-two. I did not insist how considerable an age it then seemed.

"'Which college are you going to at Oxford?' he asked.

"'St. John's.'

"'Ah, quite one of the best. You will be very happy there. Trinity was my shop, but I often used to go to John's for meetings of the Archery Club. Perhaps you didn't know that there's great enthusiasm at St. John's about their historic Archery Club. They have marvelous lunches and then go out in the garden to shoot with bows and arrows. Sometimes when the lunch has been excessive, it's a bit dangerous, arrows flying round all over the place. But it's quite the leading club at John's; it would be an amusing experience for you if you were elected.'

"I was far too depressed to enter with much enthusiasm into the notion of the Archery Club, or tell him that I would make a singularly appropriate member. I was realizing that of course my whole Oxford career, so eagerly anticipated, was completely blighted. Undergraduates, more than any others, are children of conformity, and anyone so cruelly unique must necessarily be a pariah. I mumbled doleful replies while he chatted kindly on. But the arrow fretted me with stealthy fire, and the cleric's amiable regard became rather pebbly. His was an established mind, neatly reticulated into a seemly satisfying world; the slightest whisper of my furious fancies would have pained him unspeakably. The obvious necessity for concealing everything I was really thinking about made me gloomy and solemn.

"'I'm glad you approach your studies in a serious spirit,' he said finally. 'You won't be wasting your time in mere pranks.'

"He finished his coffee and rose. Sunk in private misery, I forgot to rise with him. He turned to pick up his napkin from the next table, and standing so backed directly on my naked barb. At the moment I was absently finishing my savory; when I heard him leap and yell I turned aghast; he, seeing me fork in hand, can only have thought I had wan-

tonly prodded him in sheer overplus of savagery. The head waiter came running; the other guests stared to see the admired prelate distractedly chafing his postremity and glaring excommunication. 'Let me explain,' I cried wildly, ready to confess all and cast myself on his mercy; but the very phrase condemned me. I will not elaborate the dreadful scene. I still remember the face of the head waiter. If it had been Mrs. Elphin-Elphinstone herself who had been impaled he could not have been more scandalized. There was only one decency possible. I packed, paid my bill, called a taxi, and sought another lodging. It occurred to me, in the cab, that perhaps I should have sent for Nurse Edwards, care of Lady Smithers, and offered to pay for a compress or tourniquet. But a tourniquet would have been awkward."

V

A long and restless night gave ample opportunity for meditation. Sleep was difficult: he had to lie accurately on edge, and could not turn over on the other side without first getting out of bed. If he dozed into peaceful oblivion some uncanny movement would jar the weapon and bring him back to his affliction. There it was, fantastic, inextricable, struck through the very pulse of his consciousness. Besides being infernally uncomfortable, the thing suggested further privations. A life of celibacy, for instance—a thought distasteful to young men. If it had not been for a bottle of brandy in his luggage he would hardly have slept at all; but he discovered that generous potations seemed to dull the point of the shaft and make it smaller. A lukewarm consolation crept into his mind: perhaps everyone else was also concealing some equally embarrassing anguish—a secret that perhaps did not take the same awkward shape, but was just as disturbing.

The following day the arrow baffled him by showing itself strangely variable. As he slunk shamefully from his lodging it seemed as big as a harpoon; he hailed a taxi, to avoid any possible collision, and went to the Express Company. There, after a difficult time standing sideways in the line of people pressing vigorously toward the teller's grill, he managed to cash a check. He was leaving, intending to visit an American doctor, when he was greeted by an old crony who came boisterously forward. He dodged behind a pillar and extended his hand warily. His friend, thinking this a drollery of some sort, laughed gaily and peered round the column. "What's on your chest?" he cried, noting the furtive behavior. The sufferer's hand flew to his wishbone, but the remark was purely accidental, for the encumbrance had now shrunk to such modest size that he could lap his overcoat over the feathery butt and guard the rearward point by covering it with one gloved hand behind his back. Encouraged, he postponed medical consultation and, as his friend would not be shaken off, they lunched together. For a couple of hours, when he privily rummaged in his bosom, he could have sworn there was nothing there. Yet it returned again later, pricking him with impossible suggestions, so that he had to stand apart round less frequented street corners, struggling to master the glittering thing by strong force of will, or else hire a taxi and ride expensively secure until it shrank to manageable dimension.

But, without committing himself in any way, he had learned from his friend one fact which promised to be helpful. At the American Embassy there was a young man employed who was, as the customary tautology has it, a fraternity brother of theirs. This means that the young official was bound, by some juvenile severities of their Greek-letter union, to mutual succor in distress. So in one of the anterooms of the Embassy's business office we see the stricken one mysteriously consulting his fellow Hellenist. There was an exchange of passwords as Greek met Greek, though not in any

accent approvable by Liddell and Scott; and the visitor displayed, for identification, a generous sheaf of testimonials from Middle-Western pastors and pedagogues. With these muniments Rhodes Scholars are always plentifully provided. The attaché, who, with spats and cutaway and a conviction that no gentleman sallies abroad without a cane, had also put on a certain fatigue of the homeland simplicities, glanced hastily through the assurances that his brother was of modest and winning nature, a fine influence in the Christian life of the community, a brilliant scholar, a leader of glee clubs, and a triple-threat halfback. He noticed that in spite of these resources the caller looked somewhat haggard, exhaled a faint vapor of cognac, and had a curious habit of standing averted, holding one arm doubled back behind his shoulders. He prepared himself with several irrefutable reasons why the Ambassador was not at liberty.

"See here," said the caller, in whom after several days of wretchedness the sentiment of anger was now uppermost, "is this the place to file a complaint against the British government?"

The young diplomat was fully aware that complaints against the British, or any other government, were rarely efficacious. And his promotion, slow at best, depended largely on his finesse in preventing the channels of communication from being choked with the assorted woes of American travelers. Accordingly, he had framed a polite theorem for the various emergencies of his bureau, to the effect that the United States government, though undoubtedly a sovereign power, cannot safeguard its citizens against all the miscellaneous vexations of life. This apothegm, though frequently in use, he was always able to utter as if freshly inspired for the immediate instance. It was ready to his lips, but something in the manner of his inquirer led him to a more comradely candor.

"Why, yes," he said, "if necessary. But I doubt if it'll do much good. And it depends on the nature of the complaint. If it's an income tax . . ."

"It's no use my trying to explain. You wouldn't believe me. I've been to a doctor and all he can suggest is that it's a case of *hyperaesthesia sagittaria*. He's delighted about it, but then he doesn't have to live with it."

"You'll pardon me, I'm sure," said the attache, "but if you can state the nature of the grievance . . ."

"I've drawn up a document about the whole affair," said the plaintiff, producing a manuscript. "Now remember, this is entirely confidential except as regards official channels. But it's the only recourse I have. If you'll run your eye over this . . ."

The clerk read:—

WHEREAS ——— ———, a citizen of the United States of America, 22 years of age, residing temporarily at 18, Torrington Square, London, desires to make complaint against H. M. Government as follows:

Whereas on the 3rd day of October instant, about the hour of five p. m., the said ———, on his lawful occasions and peaceably pursuing own concerns, was walking through Piccadilly Circus, when a missile nearest describable as an arrow, projected by person or persons unknown, did so strike and transfix the body and soul of said ——— that he has thereafter gone in peril of his life and wits. And whereas the said arrow is not by any ascertainable means removable from the body of the plaintiff, and whereas it has afflicted him grievously in mind, body, and estate, subjecting him to extreme humiliations and necessitating medical treatment for a highly nervous and excited condition and repeated hire of motor taxicabs to prevent embarrassing H. M. subjects on the sidewalks; and whereas the petitioner feels his future career and tranquillity gravely compromised by this affliction, he respectfully submits that it is the plain duty of H. M. Government, acting through the London County Council or any other lawful body, to keep the region of Piccadilly Circus free of such random projectiles and that neglect of such precautions has resulted in a delict upon the person of a citizen of the United States.

Your petitioner therefore prays that damages be awarded commensurate with the offense, and that the American Ambassador in London be instructed to make representations to that end to the officers of H. M. Government.

"But I don't see any arrow," objected the fraternity brother.

"Hush! Not so loud!" said the petitioner, looking round nervously at several other citizens who were waiting their turn to make complaints. He leaned across the counter and whispered hoarsely.

The clerk seemed a little shocked. He read the document again and privately concluded that the Ohio chapters of Nu Nu Phi ought to be more careful in their elections. But one business of an embassy is to allow Time to anoint its healing lotion upon human abrasions, and he fell back on sound governmental principles.

"Well," he said, "I'll put this through the proper routine. But don't expect questions to be asked about it in Parliament next week. First it'll have to go before some Congressional committee in Washington, I suppose, and when they see the word *arrow* they'll probably refer it to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Also, it must pass through our legal department here, to be put in correct form."

But he was almost ashamed of his flippancy when he saw the exalted earnestness of the other man.

"Did you ever have a secret so important," asked the caller, "that no one could possibly be told, and yet everyone knew it anyhow?"

"Why, sure; that's what embassies are for, to deny that sort of thing." As he spoke he thought anxiously of his own secrecies: private experiments with a monocle that he had never dared wear publicly, and that it was near closing time and he had an engagement to meet a young lady for tea at Rumpelmayer's.

"Put your hand here," the caller said, opening his overcoat.

The attaché did as directed. He felt a sharp sting and a warm hypodermic sparkle snaked up his arm. For an instant he was giddy, the office behind him with its terraced filing cases seemed to rock and grow dim. He clung to the counter as to the bulwark of a ship. He heard music faintly played, the light clatter of voices, and in a brightness soft as candleshine he saw the face of the damsel at Rumpelmayer's.

He steadied himself, fixing his mind on the tight-lipped engraving of George Washington.

"Really, you know . . . sorcery . . . I'm not sure that this comes under the scope of this office."

The impatience of several ladies waiting attention began to be audible.

"Do what you can," said the plaintiff, and repeated the covenant of their Greek-letter federation. He left, making a wide zigzag to give the other clients a safe offing. The attaché, concealing behind the counter a hasty glance at his wrist-watch, assigned two elderly ladies to a confrère and selected the younger one for himself. The only consolation in this job, he reflected, was that perplexity did sometimes descend upon traveling citizens who were really attractive; but even so, not as alluring as the graceful creature who would soon be in St. James's Street, taking her tea and pastry with only one hand.

VI

The plaintiff in Torrington Square was surprised to receive, a few days later, a letter from the American Embassy. It was embossed with the official seal of the United States, which he was startled to observe consisted of an eagle with excessively straddled legs, one of which held a cluster of arrows and the other a foliage that he took to be an olive bough. Arrows, he thought ironically, he could supply for himself; the message, written in the attaché's own hand, was evidently intended to be of the nature of the olive branch. It was informal and cordial.

"Your statement," he read, "is hav-

ing due attention. I have been thinking about the matter and, speaking as a friend and brother in old Nunu, I believe perhaps you take it too seriously. I think that when you get up to Oxford the pleasant surroundings of that peaceful place will soon remedy the condition; in the meantime I suggest that you enjoy some innocent diversion. Nothing is more entertaining than a professional Anglo-American Hands Across the Sea meeting, so I am enclosing a ticket to the annual luncheon of the Atlantic Harmony. You will find this well worth attending, Lord Aliquot is to take the chair and Admiral Stripes, U.S.N., will be one of the speakers. Yours cordially."

The date set for the luncheon was the day before he would leave for Oxford. He decided to go.

The attaché was right: one of those meetings at which the two chief branches of the Anglo-Saxon race convene to confess their mutual esteem is indeed fruitful study for the pensive. The Atlantic Harmony lunched in the ballroom of a huge hotel; behind the high table the banners of both nations were draped and blended; an orchestra in the gallery burst into traditional airs; cocktails began and champagne followed. Dishes sacred to England and America were on the menu and, judging by the notable bulk of most of the ladies, there was no danger of the race perishing of starvation. It was an orgy of friendly sentiment; for the time being the Atlantic ocean seemed a mere trickle; one had to remind oneself that only the fortunately high rate of steamship fares prevented two mutually infatuated populations from putting their affections to the proof *en masse*. Even a man with a serious gravamen pending against the British government could not resist the general infection of goodwill. He waited in the lobby until the crowd had gone in, which made it possible to reach his seat without spiking anyone; and by the time the wine had made a few circulations he was in excellent humor.

Contemplating the worthy people who are drawn by irresistible magnetism to affairs of this sort, he began to wonder what was the law forbidding Anglo-American friendship to be endorsed by the young and slender. The ladies were mostly silvery and, in the case of his immediate neighbors, deaf; and the gentlemen solid; but their enthusiasm was terrific. References by Lord Aliquot to The Mother Country, cousins, blood thicker than water, the critical days of 1917, the language of Shakespeare, Magna Charta, Your Great President were received with instantaneous crashes of applause. Admiral Stripes, forgetting the extreme efficiency of the submarine cables, very nearly made Lord Aliquot a present of the United States Navy. Lord Aliquot, after humorously remarking that he himself had made the supreme sacrifice for Anglo-American union by marrying an American wife, insisted that nothing could go seriously wrong between two nations nurtured in the same sense of fair play and reverence for pure womanhood. His Lordship, an old hand at these affairs, took care to end each paragraph with an obvious bait for applause. This gave him time to be quite sure that the next one would not contain anything regrettable. An American minister, chaplain of the Harmony, offered a prayer for all branches of the English-speaking Peoples, on whom heavier than elsewhere rests the great burden of human liberty. If any Frenchman had been taken, manacled, into the room, and compelled to listen to the speeches, he would have ended in convulsions. In short, it was one of those occasions, familiar to statesmen, that cannot possibly do any harm and offer a hardworking nonconformist parson a free meal and an opportunity to address the Deity in public. Meanwhile the Swiss and German waiters scoured about busily, the champagne flowed, and when "Dixie" was played many who had never seen a cotton field scrambled up and shouted in pure hysteria.

During the halloo that followed "Dixie" he rose and cheered with the

rest. Then he saw, sitting opposite across the large round table, a girl who had been hidden from him by a bushy centerpiece of flowers. She was dark, with close-cropped hair; a little absent-looking, as though she did not take this luncheon very seriously; she had a cloak thrown over her shoulders. He was just raising his glass, with a vague intention of toasting the universe at large, when he caught her gaze. They studied each other solemnly, as becomes strangers crossing unexpectedly in so large a waste. Then, in the flush of the moment, he smiled and lifted his glass. She reached for hers, and they drank, look to look. Then, a little embarrassed, he sat down.

But something in her face or gesture fretted him, bothered him as does a cut-off telephone call; he was waiting and wondering. He tried to get another glimpse of her, but the floral piece was impenetrable. There was no time to lose: one of the neighboring matrons was asking him what was that music which had just been played, and the chairman was already hammering for silence. He stood up again for one more look, and saw that the man on her left, elevated by champagne and the gallant megalomania of the occasion, was still erect and vocal. He also saw how far back she sat from the table. Her hand, stretched out at arm's length, still lingered on the wineglass stem.

He ran round to her side of the table, and seized the joyful gentleman. "Quick!" he said. "They want us to change places. Makes it more sociable!" The other gaily assented, and took his place between the two dowagers; nor did he ever discover their infirmity.

"Aren't you warm with that cloak on?" he asked. "Can I take it off for you?"

Her quick little movement of alarm, drawing the wrap closer round her, showed him he had not made a mistake. But he did not pause to wonder at his certainty. Shy as he had always been, now it was as though he looked at a woman for the first time, and saw not the strange capricious nymph of legend but the appealing creature of warmth and trouble, ridiculous as himself. Perhaps it was the grotesque pangs of the previous days that had tutored him. Terror of other human beings had vanished; his blemish was not shameful but something to be proud of; and his next words were divinely inspired—they were brief but exactly right.

"You darling," he said.

The clapping that followed was probably intended for the Viscount Aliquot, but it came too pat to be ignored.

"And that's the first thing that's been said here that was really worth applause," he added.

She looked at him steadily, something in her eyes that might once have been terror changing into amusement; and then returned her gaze to Lord Aliquot, who seemed very far away, gesticulating at the other end of the great room. "You mustn't talk while people are whispering," she said.

She couldn't possibly have been any different, he thought triumphantly. He had a strong conviction that those dark eyebrows, the delightful soft stubble at the base of her boyish neck, that wistfully shortened upper lip had always been growing and curving like that just intentionally for him. He was waiting hopefully (as was Lord Aliquot) for Lord Aliquot to be interrupted by another round of applause.

"Of course the proper thing to say," he murmured, "would be, Haven't we met before somewhere. But it's more important to know, When are we going to meet again?"

"We haven't parted yet."

"Splendid. But are you going to listen to me or to the speeches?"

"Evidently I can't do both."

"Well, there'll be a National Anthem soon; I can feel it coming. They'll all stand up, and we can slip away. Besides, it always embarrasses me to sing the Star Spangled Banner before strangers. Let's go and have tea somewhere."

"But we haven't finished lunch yet."

"Don't let's waste time. I've got to go to Oxford to-morrow. By the way, if you had a gray dress with a little frill down the back, on what sorts of occasions would you wear it?"

"Why, right here; but I can't, it's got a hole in it."

He leaned toward her, to whisper something, and the ends of their arrows touched. There was a clear puff of sparkling brightness, like two highly charged wires making contact. Some weary guests at the speakers' table brisked up and felt their cravats, believing the time for the flashlight pictures had come. Lord Aliquot, taking it for some sort of signal, called the company to their feet for the American Anthem.

"Hurry! if we wait they'll get beyond the words they know, then everyone will spot us beating it."

They reached the door before anyone except Lord Aliquot had got beyond *What so proudly we hailed.*

"What so proudly we hailed," he said, as the words pursued them into the lobby. "That suggests taxies. Let's grab one."

VII

"Anthem? Nonsense, we've just had one."

But then they saw the old fellow meant a hansom. There it was, drawn up by the . . .

"Bet you don't know how they spell curb over here," he said as they climbed in. "They spell it K, E, R, B. You know it's the first time I ever rode in one of these things. Who's that talking to us from the sky?"

They looked up and saw a curious portrait floating upside down above them. It was framed in a little black square, like an old Flemish master—the color of Tudor brick grizzled with lichen. It proved to be the face of the lisping cabby.

"Oh, anywhere where one does drive in London."

"I want to see the Serpentine," she said. "I'm always reading about it."

"Very good, mith." The brick portrait floated a moment genially and then said with bronchial jocularity, "Adam and Eve and the Therpentine." They laughed—the sudden perfect laughter of those overtaken unawares by the excellence of the merrymaking world. The cab tilted, jingled, swayed off, rolling lightly like a canoe.

"Of course this is simply magic. Things just don't happen like this," he said as they settled themselves. "Are you comfortable? If I put my arm round you, it would prevent the point of yours from punching into the seat. You see, I can sit sort of diagonal, and then if you slide over this way . . ."

"It gives me a spinal frill when it touches anything," she admitted.

He looked at her amazed.

"Yes, that girl on the ship told me what you said. She was my roommate."

"Why didn't I ever see you on board?"

"You did, but you didn't look at me."

"I'll make up for it now."

"Besides I was ill. Not just seasick ill, ill in my mind. Don't let me go in a ship again—it's too elemental."

The tips of the two arrows touched, and again there was a little fizzing flash. Just the thing for lighting cigarettes, they found, and practiced it.

"As a matter of fact I have two arms," he added presently.

"The dusk comes early in London," she said.

"You darling," he repeated, saying it with the accent that can only be uttered in a hansom.

"I think mine's loose," she said. "It seems to waggle a little."

"Mine doesn't bother me a bit as long as we sit like this."

"I thought I was mad."

"So did I. Now I know it. I went to an astrologer, one of those fellows in a dressing-gown on Oxford Street. He asked me my birthday, December 21. He said that I came just between two signs of the Zodiac, Sagittarius and the Goat. I guess I'm both of them at once."

Rocking lightly, tingling like a tray of highballs, the cab jingled. Music came from somewhere—a street-piano perhaps—the same old tune, drifting sadly on waves of soft smoky air; a mendicant melody with no visible means of support. They called to the cabby to follow it, they pursued the vagrant chords down unknown ways of dusk, while London behind them muted its rhythm to a pounding hum. At last they found the minstrel, pulled up beside him, and startled him by their new method of lighting cigarettes.

"I'm still not quite sure of the difference between a half crown and a florin," he said.

"Then give him both."

When they reached the Serpentine it was too dark to appreciate it.

"Let's bruise it with our heel," she said. "I mean, let's go somewhere. Let's go home, wherever that is."

"Where was it we first met?" He searched his memory. "Long ago. Yes, at that hotel. We'll go back there to tea."

"Is it all right to feel a bit queer in a hansom cab? I mean, almost as though you were on board a ship? I guess I'm worried about my arrow. It doesn't seem to fit as well as it did. My precious arrow. . . ."

His also was trembling strangely. Two lonelinesses must always feel disconcerted when they encounter.

"Darling, darling"; and as she came close into his arms with a queer shudder, the two sparkling darts slipped quietly to the back of the seat.

In the palm-room of that hotel is a ceiling of painted mythology. While you wait for anyone who may be coming to have tea with you you can examine a series of episodes gracefully conjectured from the life of a famous family. First there is Aphrodite, rising alluringly from the foam of a blue sea whose crumbling surf is pink with sunrise. Then there is the marriage, if one calls it so, of Aphrodite and Hephæstus—Vulcan, if you prefer, the fellow the Swedes name their matches for. It was a queer marriage for so handsome a goddess when Aphrodite became the first Mrs. Smith; but handsome women so often choose odd-looking men. Then there's their small boy, Eros, with the toy bow and arrows his father made for him, asking Vulcan to sharpen the darts for him; and his father, busy about thunderbolts, replying that the toys are quite sharp enough. In the last scene Eros, grown to a braw laddie, is trying a chance shot at Psyche. You generally have plenty of time to study all four scenes.

In that hour, late for tea and early for dinner, the palm-room was comfortably quiet. The hotel, after the fitful fever of the Atlantic Harmony, slept well. The occasional clink of a teaspoon or a thicker waft of cigarette smoke rising through foliage gave the only trace of what various big game lurked in that jungle. An orchestra groaned softly somewhere far away. It was all so extremely hotel-like, they might just as well have still been on board a ship.

"By the way," he said, "you haven't told me how you happened to go to that lunch."

"Why, it was a young man at the Embassy. He gave me a ticket, when I went there to complain about Piccadilly Circus. I mean, about arrows flying round like that. It shouldn't be allowed."

It was at this moment that he noticed the ceiling. It interested him so that he stood up and cricked his neck to see it accurately.

"Have you had all the tea you need? I've got an idea. There's an errand we ought to do." He carefully picked up the arrows which he had laid under his chair.

The hansom was outside.

"Why, it's still waiting!" she cried. "What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming."

"He must have come back for us. I guess he knows the symptoms."

"The blessed old thing."

"And for all he knew, he might have had to wait till to-morrow."

She made no reply to this but skipped lightly in. The charioteer leaned indulgently downward, his head on one side, like a disillusioned old centaur looking kindly upon the pranks of a couple of young demigods.

"Well, guvner, which way thith time? 'Ampthtead 'Eath?"

"We want to go and look at a statue."

"Lord love a duck, guvner, the gallerieth ith clothed."

"The statue in Piccadilly Circus. What do they call it?"

"'Im? Why that'th Cupid."

They drew up in a side street and crossed the crowded space on foot. Happy as he was, quit of the infernal pang, once more oblivious of terror, mortal loneliness, and dismay, yet the cicatrix of the arrow was still tender. For an instant, as she pressed close beside him, he realized that none of these exquisite moments could be lived again.

The same bobby was directing the traffic; the same imprisoned fires paced like tigers on the rooftops. The winged boy, tiptoe in jaunty malice, was black against the emerald sky. He pointed to the dainty silhouette of the bow.

"A Circus is where one would expect to find sharpshooters," she said.

He climbed past the flower girls, who were arranging their stock of evening boutonnières, and laid the two shining arrows at the base of the frolic statue.

"Here, you dropped something," he said to Eros.

THE END

LOVE POSTPONED

BY RUTH FITCH BARTLETT

I WAS a fool to put your love away,
As if it were a treasure I could save
For some inevitable rainy day.
Love does not ride on every seventh wave,
Nor burst with crocus-certainty each spring.
Why did the thrifty proverbs of my youth
Make me too cautious for this transient thing,
And set a spinster Prudence up for Truth?

Suppose we meet again and set the stage,
Dressing with care to speak our lovers' parts,
Will the old words still flash upon the page,
Will there be any laughter in our hearts?
I was a fool to think that love would linger
Until I beckoned with a tardy finger.

"HAPPINESS IN EVERY BOX"

THE GREAT AMERICAN ILLUSION

BY ERNEST BOYD

THE pursuit of happiness is, I believe, one of the privileges which the Fathers of this Republic regarded as the especial and inalienable right of every American citizen. Happiness exists not only in every box of certain candies, but it apparently has a tangible existence in the world of men, and the American who is unhappy feels that he has a grievance. In other countries and in other ages, ever since the beginning of civilization, the attainment of happiness has been the ostensible aim of mankind, and grave minds have pondered upon a definition of that state, with varying results. It has been left, however, to modern America to reduce both problems, that of attainment and definition, to their simplest terms.

If, as pessimistic patriots of the old school declare, liberty is the youngest of the average American's cares to-day, happiness is certainly his most cherished superstition. Not that much time is spent upon metaphysical inquiries into the nature of happiness. Since the philosophy of the Puritans gradually made way for pragmatism, it became as obviously impossible to accept their somewhat negative conception of the good life as it was superfluous to put forward any other in its place. Whatever is, is right—provided it works. If it does not, it must be wrong, and must be discarded. In the vernacular of common practice: it's all right if you can "get away with it." The idiom itself typifies flight from responsibility and from consequences—both are liable to interfere with that much-desired but indeterminate happiness.

The results of this pragmatism confront the American on every side. Young girls in dreary towns and villages, brought up on that indigestibly mixed diet of seventeenth-century English Protestantism and eighteenth-century French philosophy—the only traditions upon which these States so perilously and incongruously repose—discover in the movies or the Sunday supplements that they can come to New York and be "glorified." Their aim is to be happy, that is, to get money and fame, or notoriety, at least. If they succeed, they are justified. In this laudable ambition they are aided by the sympathetic plaudits of the press and the support of their communities, which also believe in the right to happiness. To send these girls back to the village dressmaker's sewing-machine, or to the cows, would be to deprive them of the rights guaranteed to them by the Revolution. When, in the end, they turn on the gas, or fall "accidentally" from hotel windows while the merriment of the guests is at its height, it usually transpires that they are not happy after all. Nell Gwynn managed these things somewhat better, but she had no claim to anything more than her luck and her woman's wit could give her.

It is unnecessary to over-emphasize the case of the to-be-glorified American girl emancipating herself from those regions described by H. L. Mencken as the "corn and Bible belts" of the

United States. In serener and simpler lives the same will-o-the-wisp leads its victims into strange dilemmas. We have recently had the plaint of a wife who has been so harshly used by fate that carking financial cares are her sole portion. She frankly exhibits the poverty and hardships that have come between her and the happiness to which she is, of course, entitled. She began her married life with a small inheritance and she and her husband owned their house which they sold at a profit. On coming to New York they acquired a farmhouse on Long Island and were presented with half the purchase money on a house in town. In the city they kept three servants and two in the country. Relatives provide a great deal of the clothing for the wife and two children. Doctors and dentists are in attendance and insurance policies are paid. This couple are unhappy; the perversity of their fate is almost unendurable.

To an innocent foreigner this tale of woe sounds like some burlesque upon the theme of "poor little rich girl." Two houses and two or three servants, financial and other help from relatives, a piece of marketable property, and a small inheritance at the outset—what destitution is here! One thinks of the struggles of men and women starting out of poverty, or really modest circumstances, achieving perhaps one maid-of-all-work after many years of a useful and honorable career. But they were not born under that American star which promises happiness and ease. They were born in Europe and, if we know of their years "on the ragged edge," it is because some of them have been remembered in biographies or autobiographies. Had their goal been happiness, we should never have heard of them. There are thousands and thousands of people like them, who are not afraid of struggle, even though no fame or virtue will ever be credited to them for their simple acceptance of the plain facts of life.

Even marriage is regarded as "chaotic" because it does not conform to the constitutional guarantee of happiness in every American home. The notion that marriage is a partnership with any other end in view than the maximum of personal bliss for each individual concerned is evidently unthinkable. Let us be happily married at any cost, including that of the institution itself, is the unwritten law which reformers have formulated. Consequently, the marrying habit flourishes and multiplies, while the number of happy marriages declines. Facilities for divorce are a menace, not to the abstract idea of marriage (as Europeans often imagine), but they are a menace to marriage as a practical human device. They put a premium upon failure, and the more the institution is worshiped as a fetish, the less workable does it become in practice. Americans are obsessed by the abstraction of marital happiness, but for the marriage bond they have a childish contempt. They see in marriage licenses some impossible promise of happiness and renew them with ingenuous faith. It is very much as if the holder of an automobile license were to expect the State to teach him how to drive, guarantee the condition, and look after the upkeep of the car.

The victims of the matrimonial myth are perhaps the most remarkable examples of the American capacity for the illusion of happiness. People who mistake the contact of two epidermises for the consummation of a great sacrament rush, or are rushed, into print, to tell the amazing tale of their deception. Had they not paid the homage of marriage to bourgeois virtue, the bourgeoisie would never have heard of them. If Wordsworth had been a poet in Greenwich Village to-day, we should not have had to wait a century for the revelation of his carnalities.

As the statistics show, the grounds for divorce grow increasingly frivolous: only 164,609 divorces were granted in 1923 on the grounds of adultery. This means that the persons involved were engaged

in the national pastime of seeking happiness. Easy divorce is having the same effect upon the matrimonial habits as Prohibition has had upon the drinking habits of the American people. Where one or two cocktails were once the rule, from six to ten are now expected. The man who would formerly have hesitated at his first marriage now plunges cheerfully into his sixth. Divorce-made marriage, however, is much more popular than man-made Prohibition. The former promises happiness, whereas the latter deliberately offers a substitute.

To the idea of happiness America offers no sales-resistance. Like all dubious and usually spurious commodities, it has been effectively "sold" to a public highly susceptible to advertising. You may have a perfectly good home. The question is: does it satisfy? Are you getting out of that investment in happiness all that you expected? Here is an opportunity to better yourself, to become a twenty-five thousand dollar a year man—in terms of alimony, of course. Only the "psychology of salesmanship" can explain the phenomenon of recurring marriage, the eternal domestic return. The concept of marriage as a religious or social contract, or both, covers the multitude of things which married life fosters and preserves. The one thing it does not guarantee is the prolongation of those raptures and illusions of romantic, youthful love, which constitute "happiness" in this particular connection. Yet that is apparently the one thing which the practitioners of more and better marriages pursue from one divorce court to another. They are dissatisfied with married life the moment it approximates to reality. How can one account otherwise for the superstition that there can be any essential difference between a first marriage and a third, a second, and a sixth? Apart from certain notorious and universally accepted grounds for separation—insanity and so forth—the reasons for exchanging one set of illusions for another are specious. America's clamor for happiness is the expression of a childish dissatisfaction with life as it is.

Happiness has been defined by an older civilization than ours as the absence of pain. The wisest of our modern philosophers have not improved upon this, but have contented themselves with the thought that happiness is not a positive but a negative concept. To the pragmatic American mind such an idea seems to be inconceivable. Only in terms of Puritan asceticism was that wisdom palatable. Earthly joys were dead-sea fruit. Happiness was not in any box, not even in the confessional; it must be sought in heaven. Having moved somewhat away from that attitude towards life—as American life itself has astoundingly moved away from the conditions upon which the national philosophy was postulated—Americans today are naïvely pragmatic. Their forebears were naïvely spiritual, but there was an elementary subtlety in their point of view which appears profound when compared with the impatient materialism of the contemporary American idealist.

The country is full of Peter Pans believing in the juvenile romance of materialistic idealism, with its postulate of happiness. The democratic superstition logically demanded this and, like all the other exactions of democracy, it was inevitably conceded. If some people are happy, that privilege must not be restricted to them. This is a free country. Happiness must be put on a community basis, organized, and made available for all. Away, therefore, with class distinctions in this field. Who would dare to suggest that happiness is the most personal and elusive, the least democratic of all human possessions?

To do so would be to utter a platitude, and what is platitude when pitted against a good slogan? A drive is sufficient to "put over" the idea of happiness, and once people have started on that treasure hunt they are safely employed. Their discontents raise no fundamental questions. A woman has ten mink coats

and is not satisfied with life? Let her get another husband and try ermine. If this couple is unable to make both ends meet with three servants, two houses, and the aid of relatives, they must on no account lower their standard of living. It would be un-American to retrench or economize. Better consult a psychoanalyst and change partners until happiness results. If husband and wife no longer see each other at forty with the eyes of eighteen, then they are being frustrated and defrauded of the happiness that is their due: keep that schoolgirl mentality.

American materialism has long been the favorite theme of both native and foreign critics of the national *mores*. Like the legend of the land of the Almighty Dollar, this myth will sooner or later be abandoned. That Americans are less attached to money than any other people is now as evident as the fact that their materialism is the idealism of pragmatists, the belief in definite solutions to all problems and in definite results as the reward of all endeavor. If one strives for happiness, it must exist, otherwise why strive for it? Disappointment with what has been attained does not indicate the chimerical nature of the object; there is still a further stretch of rainbow at the end of which is the crock of gold.

America enjoys, among the other generous illusions of youth, this belief in happiness as a positive and tangible good. In a couple of hundred years of inexperience there has been no time for a genuine philosophy of life to germinate and flower in diverse forms according to individual and local circumstance. The simple ethics of Puritanism are as inadequate as a basis for modern American metaphysics as the pre-industrial commonplaces of the French Revolution for modern American politics. A moral and political system designed for a small, homogeneous community of British colonists cannot possibly answer the needs of a vast conglomeration of polyglot peoples, differing in race, religion, and tradition. They have been united in a few elementals of common citizenship, but they can bring no common ancestral or national experience to the solution of either their own or the nation's problems.

No national morality has been yet evolved, with its roots deep in the soil of centuries. The various examples of "chaos" upon which reformers dwell are merely facets of the vast chaos of a nation in the making. It is difficult enough for those in the direct tradition of the first Colonists to square seventeenth-century theories with the facts of the greatest and most rapid experiment in industrial development known to history. To expect it of the hordes that have poured into this country out of entirely different conditions is to expect the impossible. Nations and individuals in older countries have had many hundred of years of common experience and tradition behind them before they began to be gradually confronted by the conditions and problems which were thrust upon America within the space of a little more than a century.

Pragmatic idealism is the way of escape. It leaves fundamentals untouched and concentrates upon what is immediately practicable or immediately illusory. Certain elementary principles of what is called Americanism can be inculcated or imposed by force. After that the individual is left to his own devices, and what could be more natural than his choice of happiness as fulfilling the promise of American life? It is a deep, eternal human aspiration, and this is the one country where its realization seems plausible to trusting minds. Hope of that realization drew the Pilgrims here, and the same hope causes the bedraggled and unwanted brachycephalics to scan quota figures to-day. Those first voyagers, however, had an advantage over all their successors and a great majority of their descendants. They defined their happiness first and sought it afterwards. They had not come too late into a world too new.

ULYSSES IN AUTUMN

BY JOSEPH AUSLANDER

I WHO knew Circe have come back
To sink a furrow in the loam;
Left twilights bellowing and black
For the soft glow of home,
To hear instead of a guttural sea
The needles of Penelope.

Still in my heart the Trojan sack
Hisses and Helen's beauty goes
Glimmering . . . and I have come back
To drink the stale cup of repose—
I who knew Circe and the wine
That turns men grunting into swine.

Can I forget Achilles? Fly
For ever from Calypso's guile?
The roaring red pit of that Eye
Drown in some domestic smile?
Cluck at a sweaty plow who led
The white-flanked stallions of Diomed?

No, for these nerves are iron yet,
And in these veins, this caverned breast
Echoes the howling parapet;
The trumpets will not let me rest. . . .
Think you Odysseus drowses so
Who still can bend the terrible bow!

The lotos-voices call my blood
Implacable and rumorous;
All night there drums a ghostly thud
Of feet. . . . O young Telemachus,
Plead with your mother to release
My spirit fevered for the Fleece!

The trees are straining in the storm,
Spattering gold, and from the sea
The old tang creeps between the warm
Breath of her lovely flesh and me;
Each dank leaf dripping down in fire
Fuels the dream of Troy and Tyre.

I know it will be some little thing
Like wild geese in a streaming wedge
Severely beautiful, a string
Of bird prints on the water's edge
That suddenly shall crack galley whips
And hurl me headlong to the ships!

THE CHEER-LEADER IN LITERATURE

BY WILLIAM McFEE

PAUSING in the midst of the morning mail, when an invitation to speak at a book-fair, letters from publishers in praise of their new novels, and a note from a young lady seeking counsel in the business of authorship are to be found with more urgent communications, the transplanted Englishman finds himself reflecting once again upon the peculiar problem of the expatriate. He is aware of a special duty towards the land of his adoption. He has to cultivate a reasonably agreeable attitude towards American institutions without losing, any more than he can help, that first sharp freshness of observation which gives value to the criticisms of the newcomer and the transient.

Unfortunately such a combination of virtues is not easy, and they seem often to be mutually exclusive. The process of acclimating the mind dulls it to the essential peculiarities of the new surroundings. This may account for the failure of the philosophers of our day to comment upon one very remarkable characteristic of modern American life. I allude to the practice of training large bodies of students in schools, colleges, and by mail, in the profession of novel and story writing.

This, however, is only the visible result of a fundamental and exclusively American attitude towards the young idea in Literature. Readers of Kipling's *Stalky and Co.* will remember the schoolboy author who was good-humoredly cuffed and derided by all the schoolmasters except the Head, who showed his wisdom merely by exposing the boy to good literature in his private study. Kipling was describing his own youthful experience, and we are justified in doubting whether he would have benefited by the modern courses in short-story and verse writing.

To quote Kipling's case is legitimate. It is typical of the English attitude towards literary aspirants. Not only in schools, but in the home, in factories, offices, and in ships at sea, I have encountered that harsh inclement state of mind which discouraged the weaklings, so that their ambitions died away and they became reconciled to some modest and useful function in our industrial system.

In America the opposite seems to be the rule. The general sentiment is one of eager welcome for the faintest sign, real or fancied, of the literary and artistic faculties. We have reached a point where the manufacture of authors on a quantity-production basis is in full force all over the country. It is accepted as a logical development of university work, and so it may strike many Americans as highly unreasonable to suggest that the propagation of authorship, especially of fiction, is no part of a university's responsibilities. Nevertheless, this proposition is herewith seriously advanced, and it is especially contended that the ultimate achievement of schools for fiction is the establishment of mediocrity as the controlling influence in American literature.

The general atmosphere of warm humid and profitable benevolence towards authorship, however, is not confined to our great institutions of learn-

ing. It parades the market place, and scores of gentlemen teach novel-writing and short-story writing by mail. It permeates the home, and parents whose children have revealed the shocking precocity of a poem or essay forthwith begin to plan a literary career for the little monster, instead of giving the child a good spanking and sending it out to play.

This may be thought an uncharitable view. I have no hesitation in asserting that it strikes anyone raised in England as remarkable—this lack of a sense of proportion in dealing with the adolescent beginnings of literature. I speak from experience. I wrote from the age of eight. I am convinced that the fairly happy life I have led since, and also any success in the business of writing I have achieved, is largely due to the bracing animosity of schoolmasters, fellow-scholars, and the home circle. Success in any of the arts, I imagine, derives fundamentally from a profound and usually unconscious conviction, situated in the very center of the child's being, that there is some mystical connection between itself and writing or drawing or music. It is, to speak fancifully, a sort of burning incandescent point in the child's inmost soul, which is the promise of greatness. To imagine that family antagonism and derision will quench this conviction of the child is to ignore the almost universal lesson of biography.

This strongly expressed opinion is not an attack upon the teaching of English, or upon education, but upon the present-day infatuation for "courses" in the practice of fiction-writing. And if teachers of literature, who understand how such aids to students are straitly confined to the mere outlines of the subject, imagine the general public so regard them, I may mention an adventure of my own when I lived in New Orleans.

The lady with whom I boarded for a while had a son, a youth in his teens, and when I came home at night he was to be found in the parlor, studying from a series of severely practical-looking textbooks. He was about sixteen, and my own conjecture was that he was learning algebra and trigonometry, or possibly French and Latin. One evening I took up the open book and I was dumbfounded to find that he was learning how to write short stories. Another little book was devoted to electrical engineering. Sheaves of papers, received by mail from a college in Western America, were spread over the table. He was a quiet respectable lad, and I was moved to lead him into conversation. Yes, he was going in for short-story-writing. No, he didn't find it very difficult. He was "studying the structure," he said. I bashfully remarked that some years previously I had had a small book published. "Of course," said this remarkable young man, "that comes later."

Now the extraordinary thing about this boy and his little textbooks was that he possessed not the remotest conception of what he was trying to do. He had no curiosity, and the writer who has no curiosity is condemned for all eternity. Here was I, a foreigner, a stranger within his gates, sitting there telling him I had not only written a book but had got it published in London—the Mecca of the Western World in the Nineteenth Century—and he never even glanced in my direction! When I was his age, anyone who had written even a magazine article was enveloped in a golden glamour. If it be asked what that has to do with the subject, I can only say that literature is glamour and nothing else. If you cannot master the evocation of that, all your writing is no more than a sorrowful waste of time. If your music, your painting has no glamour, you were better employed in a garage or a carpenter's shop. Indeed, I would go further and say that a man can achieve that magic in the garage and joinery if he is a true craftsman. And there are many, many young men and women in this country to-day industriously fagging through courses in fiction and playwriting and short-story writing who are destined to the most tragic dis-

illusionment in the future, and who might have had true happiness in making engines, or clocks, or tables, and cabinets.

II

Now this nation-wide illusion that all arts and professions can be taught by mail and works of art produced by the methods successful in commerce has engendered a correspondingly artificial state of mind in everybody connected with literature. It has brought forth a crowd of ladies and gentlemen who bear a remarkable resemblance to the white-jerseyed squad at a big football game. They are, in fact, the cheer-leaders of literature. They work upon the principle that if you only *believe* in your side and yell loud enough you can overturn the laws of God and of nature and score a goal.

This argument is sound if literature is merely a struggle between publishers, each with his team of star authors who are being trained to bear down all opposition. It is justified if literature is to be classed with motor-car and steel-billet manufacture or the stock-yard industry. But if, as we are assuming here, literature is one of the fine arts, then the cheer-leaders, the bally-hoo barkers, the artful dodgers of the advertising department and the deep-breathing press agents, the producers of the spurious exfoliations of rococo English so dear to the blurb-writers' heart, are arrogating to themselves a position out of all proportion to their real significance.

Literature as a fine art is to-day in the position of a parasitic growth. It is the poor relation of the standardized trade goods which keep the presses rumbling. The publisher who finds the capital involved in producing the works of original thinkers and creative artists derives that capital from the production by hundreds of thousands of copies of what I call trade-goods. He probably derives it also from the sale of magazines which, in their turn, are supported by advertising of merchandise. The fact that a work of outstanding original beauty occasionally runs into six figures and makes money is no rebuttal of the main truth of my statement. The change in our lives during the last fifty years, the materialisation of pleasure through machinery, has thrust literature as a fine art into the discard. It is in the position of a gentleman of breeding who has fallen on evil days and whose stately residence has been bought by a lusty full-blooded young barbarian who has installed a gasoline station and a delicatessen store.

I am prepared to hear vigorous protests against such a view, but an honest survey of modern life will prove the essential truth of this statement, even though it be unpalatable to idealists, that literature exists on sufferance in the midst of an immense army of mechanical devices for the production of pleasure. I can explain what I mean by this new aspect of the standing of literature by a comparison and a story.

I live in a small town and, like every other small town in America, we have a motion-picture theater. We are pretty well served in the matter of pictures; but what I call trade-goods, that is to say goods useful for trading with the natives of these regions, predominate. In the movies such goods consist of pictures which are the descendants of the Nick Carter dime novel. It may surprise the motion-picture people, but it is a fact that the public which supports such pictures is not really seeking pictures at all, but stories. What they want is the dime novel without the fatigue of reading it. Here they get it. About forty per cent of the footage of such pictures is titles, and if you look round you can see your neighbors forming the words of those titles with their lips, if not actually reading aloud. It was a picture of this kind one evening not long ago which drew us in, and the heroic cowboy with the three-gallon hat was having a hot time with the bad men of those parts. The action consisted of an interminable series of sudden mount-

ings, gallopings, and shootings. The theater was well patronised by small boys who applauded vigorously. But seated next to me was an elderly woman who had just run out from her home to seek a little change from her life of drudgery. She had no hat, and her toil-worn hands were ungloved. And how she clapped! It was almost painful to watch the desperate fascination that foolish cheap picture had for her. When the hero leaped into the saddle and tore away down the street her emotion became almost ungovernable. Her lips quivered. Her eyes were full of tears. Her frame was shaken by gusts of genuine feeling. She raised a clenched fist to her lips.

And it suddenly struck me that for such as she that shabby little theater is a church. It gives her a window looking out upon the golden country of romance. It offers in the one form which she is able to comprehend an escape from the deadening effects of our much-vaunted age of mechanism.

The position of literature to-day is something like the position of religion in the mind of that poor woman. It is very fine, no doubt, and worthy of respect, but she does not understand what it is all about. When she wants to forget her troubles she goes, not to the church, not to the library, but to the movies when there is a good "western." It is there she is taken out of herself, and by ways impossible to you and me finds some of that glamour of which I have spoken, which justifies many despised forms of art, and which leads us back, by a reasonable transition, to my main argument.

It is this, that the systematized exploitation of courses in writing assumes two major fallacies: First, that there is any real need for developing a large population of writers; second, that the methods adopted are of any use for stimulating the creation of literature. It is to be understood, of course, that I am now expressing solely my own views It is possible that there is not a single other person in the United States who holds these views.

As I see it, a wholesome neutrality on the part of public educational bodies would be a sound position to take with regard to the creative urge in young people. I have a suspicion that educators and their colleges have ample work before them in providing a good grounding in what used to be called the humanities. If the eager young people who want to get a story accepted by the popular magazines insist that they don't want to bother with Beowulf and Piers Plowman and Molière and De Musset, that they want to be taught "how to do it," it is proper to tell them that there is nothing in the world, from the beginnings of history down to the present day, from Aristotle to Santayana, from Genesis to a tour through a tire factory, which will not be of some sort of use to them in showing them how to do it. The chief duty of those who teach English should be to show how the poem, the story, the novel grows out of the writer's own personality. If there is anything in it at all of value, it is because virtue has gone out of him into that piece of writing. I fancy it is the same with music and painting. I fancy that it is because so many young men and women are devoting their lives to literature before they have any life in their minds to devote that we discover nothing of any value in what they write. They lack something which I have mentioned more than once in writing on this subject, something which La Farge calls "the acquired memories of the artist." No college, no university, no institution in itself can offer as part of its curricula these acquired memories. Compared with these, the study of rules and fetiches in order to make your product marketable is of microscopic importance. Every age has its market conditions, and if you go back, say thirty years, you will find men in America, who are utterly forgotten to-day, who understood those conditions and became wealthy by writing for the magazines, although they had

no courses in "the structure of the short story" to aid them.

Someone may insist, at this juncture, that if literature is to lay claim to the title of a fine art, it must be taught to those seeking to practice it as are the arts of painting, sculpture, dancing, drama and music. It is an interesting contention and deserves some consideration.

As regards the plastic arts, the analogy is defective because practically the whole of the vast paraphernalia of tuition is devoted to the teaching of an unfamiliar medium. The majority of people go through life ignorant of drawing, but they nearly all have a reasonable acquaintance with the arts of reading and writing. They arrive at the age of intelligence equipped with what we may call the rough elements of literature. They read and write, in some crude fashion, every day. Their daily life is carried on in a medium of which literature is merely the art-form. Painting, sculpture, and music have no such advantage in daily life. The very tools and materials of such vocations are unfamiliar to all save their practitioners. They have, in the true meaning of the word, a technic. Painters and musicians have the same road to travel as the woodcarver, the jeweler, the etcher, and lithographer. They have a world of technical difficulties to master, and the only way to master them is by practical instruction.

The same thing applies to the art of the playwright and the scenario-writer, who is only a playwright after all. It is said that Pirandello writes his plays at a table on the stage, just as the Hollywood scenarist works out the intricate details of his script on the studio set. This art of providing the raw materials of a stage-play or a motion picture is so far removed from both literature and life that there is no real analogy between it and the art of the novel and short story. These latter are presented directly to the reader and depend for their success upon an appeal to his imagination in the medium most familiar to him. The script of a play depends for its success upon the actor, the manager, and the scenic artist. It is a shot in the dark. The technical difficulties are so numerous and so elusive that after years of distinguished practice, combined with imagination and genius, the result is often flat failure and heavy financial loss.

Nothing of all this applies to the art of fiction, long or short. Our problem is something utterly different. We have to compete not only with all the other arts, not only with love and business and the intercourse of daily life, but with the inevitable indifference engendered by familiarity with our medium. Four out of five bankers, lawyers, doctors, and bond salesmen, to say nothing of newspapermen, have the plot of a story in their systems, which they are going to work out when they get the time. We who write are only doing what they simply cannot find time to do. This is bound to have an influence upon their attitude towards what they read, even though it be an unconscious influence. It is so easy to read! The work upon which we toil for weeks and months, upon which we ruminate for years before we come to the dreadful moment of beginning to write, is scanned and scorned in a few minutes of boredom when there is nothing else to do.

Moreover, the majority of authors are far from dependable witnesses as to their own methods. They attribute to technical processes the glamour deriving from their own unique and inimitable quality as literary artists. The result is that about the only book of first-hand value on this subject is a savage satire. If you wish to know how to write short stories, read *How to Write Short Stories*. I commend it in place of the dreary volumes of research so exquisitely derided in Leonard Bacon's *Ph.D.s*. The lesson Mr. Lardner's remarkable book teaches is one I have not seen mentioned in the comments upon it. It is that the quality in a story, the art, the glamour is utterly unteachable, either in class or by mail.

III

My own feeling in this matter is that "research" as it is called, is scarcely applicable to the business of writing. The secret of an author eludes you if you begin to analyse. How can you analyse glamour? How can you "teach" writing short stories and novels to young people who know nothing of the world, the flesh, or the devil? Literature comes out of our lives. It is not embedded in textbooks. The impulse to write springs from within, the sense of form can be derived only from the acquired memories of endless reading. As for the rules about "structure," if I were to offer advice based on my own experience I would say that the best way to sell a story is to break every rule in every textbook ever published. Conrad, Sherwood Anderson, Katherine Mansfield, and A. E. Coppard, all of whom know something of short-story writing, go through the conventional rules like a bull through a fence. Who taught them what they know? I was once told that John Bentley, the architect of the great Byzantine cathedral in London, designed it almost on his knees. Some of our great writers give you that impression. You can perceive, wrought into their style, the years of conflict with life and its illusions. Most of them, you will find, are humble. They do not talk big about themselves and slightingly of those who have gone before. That, you will discover, is one of the prerogatives of the present-day fashionable short-story writer. He not only feels that he is superior to John Milton because that author received forty-five dollars for "Paradise Lost" while he himself gets perhaps a couple of thousand dollars for ten thousand words, but he feels his story is superior to Milton's. Perhaps it is. Perhaps we are now in the upward surge of a vast renaissance of literature. We are assured by what I call the cheer-leaders of letters that such is the case. They leap into the air before us and go through astonishing contortions of speech and gesture to evoke a burst of cheering from us for their side. Whether we are really renascent or not, we must wait a few decades to discover; but we are certainly complacent. One of the most remarkable teams of cheer-leaders we have with us to-day is composed of the new-style reviewers. I am not blaming them, because the writers of jacket-blurbs have stolen their thunder. They have been forced by penury and the increase in the amateur literary population to adopt strange antics in order to attract attention. To be quoted you must use strong language. You must do handsprings and bellow through the megaphone at the same time. In the course of a single week recently I learned from reviews that John Galsworthy is the worst short-story writer who ever lived; that most of Conrad, Stevenson, and Walter Pater is sheer bad writing; that Jack London has come back from Hell and has written a new novel under another man's name; that Molière is an overrated bore, and Congreve so insignificant that a single story by Ring Lardner overwhelms all he ever wrote. One of the above reviewers complains that reviews are ignored by the public when buying books. Is it any wonder? Not one of those statements is believed by the person who made it. They are simply frantic bids for the attention of a milling mob of people who care very little for literature anyway, who amuse themselves with radio, motoring, golf, bridge, phonographs, vaudeville, newspapers, and movies, and to whom books are furniture. Reading books are to be had from the library, while works of reference, bought during the cross-word puzzle epidemic, are now tolerated because they make a good base for the loud-speaker.

These reviewers are a symptom of what I have mentioned, that literature is now a parasitic growth, and the sooner we realize it the sooner we shall come to our senses. Making incantations over it, gnashing our teeth, clenching our fists, and leaping into the air with a blood-curdling yell is of no avail in com-

petition with modern mechanical diversions. The *rah-rah* spirit in the literary world will inevitably react against the exploited books. People read what they will. Sooner or later they drift back to what they like. I am beginning to wonder, now that I am middleaged and acquiring a sense of proportion, whether that particular quality which we recognize as genius has any bearing at all upon an author's acceptance. I think it is more a "divine accident," to borrow a phrase from Arnold Bennett. To take a concrete instance, the extraordinary vogue of Dickens was and is in no way dependent upon those qualities we value most in him as a master of English and an unsurpassed delineator of character. As we say, people read a book for the story.

This fact, however, is often used nowadays to pooh-pooh the existence of any quality in a book except the popular story. Popular authors point to the fact that authors whom nobody would ever accuse of genius have exceeded Dickens as a seller. They state bluntly that their own duty is to their readers who demand pep and punch and zip and zoom, and art can go hang. The inference we are asked to draw is that if they chose they could produce great art, but they don't choose to do it. They deceive themselves. They can do only what they are doing. They are the product of their century as much as are the makers of radio sets and motor cars and movies. They are very useful and estimable members of society. They are—as I have found by personal correspondence, and an industrious perusal of interviews—very anxious not to be regarded as artists. They have no need to worry. A few years, and they will have had their day and ceased to be.

I said they deceive themselves; but what is their error compared with those leaders of literary thought who embrace the deception and endeavor to win the favor of the illiterate public by enthroning the writers of tedious pot-boilers in the halls of light? Are they not described with disturbing veracity in Kipling's poem of "The American Spirit," who

> "... dubs his dreary brethren Kings"?

It is possible these cheer-leaders of mediocrity are sincere, but they have no right to the positions they hold if literature is one of the fine arts. I suspect that in the back of their minds they have a confused notion that, if three or four million people buy the books of a certain author, we are obliged to concede him or her a prominent position in literature. At the risk of being regarded as conceited and high-brow, I assert that we have no right to do anything of the kind. Literature is not a democracy where numbers rule. It is an aristocracy where brains and originality are paramount. It is a fond foolishness on the part of many apologists for popular mediocrity, that to be sincere, to reach the great heart of the common people, is all that we know or ever need to know. That is very fine, but it has nothing to do with literature. Democracy is very fine, no doubt, but its principles are fundamentally opposed to the principles of literature and of art. It may be said indignantly, and the cheer-leaders will support it with a crescendo of yells, that if we must choose between democracy and literature we will abandon literature. I can only retort, in the vigorous jargon of the day, that that is all right with me. It is more than likely that we shall all have to make that choice sooner or later in the coming years. The doctrine that those who have the money and the numbers should dictate the nature of religion and science, has already become established in the Republic. What more probable than that the quality of a work of art should be referred to the same omniscient tribunal? In that day, "when the windows of the house shall be darkened and the mourners go about the streets," we shall have no more of the "excellent beauty that hath a strangeness in its proportion." We shall all be thoroughly grounded in the rumble-bumble of

psychoanalysis; we shall all have graduated in the structure of the novel, and the short story, and we shall all have hearts pounding with sincerity and moral felicities.

Well, it may be asked, and what then? Is there any objection to literature being organized? Will not the product be better than now, with no supervision? It is quite possible. Let that pass. When that day comes I am going to read, not books, but advertisements. It is my guess that American originality will seek this escape from an intolerable regime. The change will be imperceptible, of course, but inevitable. Those who want fine art in what they read will turn the pages of the magazines and read the publicity. Already in many organs it transcends the text. They will buy books like Mr. Shaw's plays—with a small thin slice of authorship in the middle between fifty or sixty pages of clever and readable blurb. Advertising corporations will hire standardized authors to write stories to fit their new volumes of appreciations. Perhaps we shall not be so badly off after all. When the news of the day comes into every room over the radio, the newspapers will consist entirely of brilliant comments on the season's merchandise. When the scenarists of the movies adapt their titles to normal intelligences, the need of novels will vanish. The time may come when the very existence of literature as a fine art will depend on the advertisement. The contemplation of such a possibility leads one to conjecture whether literature, in the sense of being a manifestation of that incandescent point in the soul of man, in the sense of being the expression of an original personality rather than the common denominator of a many-headed mediocrity, is destined to endure throughout the ages. There was a time when it did not exist and that time may come again. "The literary art," says Havelock Ellis, "lies in the arrangement of life." It implies "the transforming of the facts of life into expressive and beautiful words." For several hundred years men have been doing that in the English language, and some of us have felt that the achievements of the masters have been worthy of our admiration. So far from believing that their success can be duplicated by everybody who takes a course in the art of writing, we have nursed a foolish undemocratic conviction that what they did was inimitable. In this matter of art, the rules governing commerce and industry are not to be invoked. It is dangerous, in art, to do as others do, says a French writer whose name I have forgotten. He meant that it ought to be dangerous. His statement implies an attitude towards art which I suggest is worthy of our attention. It implies that the evocation of works of art by means of words and phrases is not a trade to be learned by every earnest young person who can read an advertisement, but a holy mystery, demanding a special equipment of heredity and experience.

Then what is the conclusion of the whole matter? What can we teach of English? My own impression is that we can teach very little, but we can inspire. Our first need is to be at ease among the masterpieces. Reference books and books of familiar quotations tend to be over plentiful in these days of card-indexes and specialists. More than in any other calling, has the teacher of English need of a colossal general knowledge. He should be a master of allusion. He must take all knowledge for his province. And he must maintain an indomitable faith that somewhere among those unpromising young people before him there is one at least with a spark of the divine fire.

WE WHO DO NOT SEE GHOSTS

A STORY

BY FLETA CAMPBELL SPRINGER

WE cannot all see ghosts. Not every hand is the conveyor of messages from an unseen world. We do not all hear voices, and for many of us the planchette and the ouija board yield no proofs. Yet I am often inclined to believe that these things are doubters' proofs, and to wonder if they are not for those who, like the multitude of old, must find in the multiplication of fishes the proof of a divinity.

For it is not the eyes nor the ears that must be convinced, but the spirit within that must give its prompt and unassailable response. Let them be convinced, then, by what means they may. For myself, I have had my proofs. I have seen immortality in the passing glance of a stranger in the street. I have had to turn away from the regard of a well-loved friend because I could no longer endure the revelation of his eyes; I have been unaccountably aware, in a quiet room, of the presence of one long dead. And there have been times, alone or among crowds, when, without premonition or any question of mine, I have suddenly *known*.

These are the proofs that convince no one but ourselves, and of which, for that reason, we so seldom speak. But because I believe them to be the experiences upon which the faith of mankind is really built, and because I also believe them to be common to most of us, I am going to try to put down, without any attempt at corroboration, the facts of one such experience.

I choose this one because it has seemed to have a kind of tellable sequence often lacking in the rest. Yet it is not easy to tell. Even now, as I begin to put it into words, I find myself confronted by its most inappropriate setting, and considering whether I might not after all, for the sake of your belief, provide a more congruous scene. But I shall not be tempted. . . .

It was in the subway, at the evening rush hour, on my way home from down town. I had entered the train far down —Brooklyn Bridge, I think it was—and had dropped, even then, into the last vacant seat.

There was nothing about the journey to set it apart from any other subway journey at that time of day. There were the same crowds pouring in at every station until the train could hold no more, and then, as if a summit had been reached, the same crowds pushing their way out again, without in the least seeming to lessen the crush. And all those motley-garbed, somber-faced people, at once too strange and too familiar for any impression, forcing their way inch by inch, and enduring with a kind of colossal patience their daily discomforts, seemed to become as always no more than a shifting mass of depersonalized figures in gray. My eyes singled no one out, caught no outstanding trait of dress even, of size, registered no individual face. It was the gray a painter achieves by mixing together all colors at once.

In the beginning I had made the usual unsuccessful attempt to read, and when

we reached 125th Street I opened my book again.

Not until we were leaving the 156th Street station did I look up to see that the train had suddenly cleared; that there were no longer any people standing in the aisle, and only a few scattered along the seats.

And then, abruptly, as if he had that instant appeared there, I saw, sitting across from me and a little down toward the end of the car, a very tall and very slender old gentleman in a suit and hat of tobacco brown, intent upon the news in an evening paper—and had the first of those strange intuitions which were the heart and the soul of our incredible experience.

For if all those others had been like so many figures in gray, this man had the effect upon me of the appearance, dramatically, unexpectedly, of a figure in full color. It was not so much the live brown of his garments which gave the effect as the vividness of his personality—and more than that, the vividness of his *meaning* something to me.

And that conviction, reaching me in my first startled glance, left no time for wonder or explanation, for so immediately that it was in reality part of the first, there came upon me from a source which seemed entirely outside myself, and with the definiteness of an almost physical impact, the knowledge that he was going to die!

Simultaneously with that knowledge, I knew that it was to be soon, and that he himself had received no hint and no word.

For everything about him seemed deep rooted in life. His whole fastidious person had the look of an intellectual, an entirely worldly man. It was in the engrossed expression of his fine aristocratic old face—though aristocratic is far too cold and too metallic a word to describe that altogether attractive and human personality. It was the face of a lover of life, whom life had loved well in return—not dulled by too much or too easy success. Virility and warmth and humor were in the impression he gave. True, he was old, if one calls the late sixties old; but he was not old in the sense one usually thinks of an old man, bent or pathetic or out of touch or confused.

One could see that youth had never estranged herself from him; that he had not yet begun to brood upon old age and death. There was that in the color of his tobacco-brown suit, in the well-worn brown gloves smoothed out across his knee, and the soft hat to match, and the brown overcoat on his arm, which said that it had never occurred to him to put on the negative gray of old men; his preferences were still undiminished, still vital and keen. And I felt, not coherently as I am putting it down, for none of these things that occurred to me then were analyzed or segregated at all one from the other, but I felt that this preference of his for brown might even be a new preference, come over him only when he went to order this very suit, and it had no more entered his mind not to indulge it than if it had been his first-year college suit. His very fastidiousness seemed the fastidiousness of youth, not the slow and careful grooming of old age and the desire to keep within the tolerance of a new and scornful generation. Not a thread of his life had been withdrawn. I doubt even if he had thought much, except in a detached, intellectual abstract way, of "spiritual things."

When I say that I knew he was going to die, I do not mean merely that the idea presented itself to my mind, through any deduction or process of thought, that he might die—but I *knew*. There is a difference between those two, and I knew. I make no attempt to say how. And the strangest thing, stranger by far than the knowledge itself, was that singular conviction of his not being aware of it himself. Yet it came to me so distinctly, so startlingly, in *words*—"He is going to die, and he sits there reading the day's petty news!"

The words had no sooner crossed my mind than I had the amazing, the bizarre sensation of feeling that they had de-

tached themselves from me, from my mind, and were beginning to move through the air, toward *him!* I realized with horror what it would mean for them to reach him, and I made an involuntary movement forward to clutch them back, to arrest them if only long enough to think what to do. At that instant I would have given everything I possessed to have been able to stop them, to call them back. But I could no more recall them than I could have recalled an exhaled breath. I could only sit and helplessly watch—for I could veritably *see* the tangible words of the thought—while it moved across that narrow space, swiftly, yet with a kind of inexorable lack of haste, to its destination.

I saw it reach him, saw him pause on a word he was reading, and then, as if the thought had automatically produced its own gesture, I saw him let fall the paper with a kind of sudden weary abandonment of all his interest; saw him lift his head, and his eyes, of a deep live brown, come unerringly to mine, and rest there disconcertingly with a curiously hurt and bewildered look, so that I was assailed by all the remorse of an actual murderer.

Yet something in the puzzled inquiry of his expression seemed to say that he had not as yet translated the words into their meaning for him. There is no better way to put it than to say that the words reaching first his subconscious mind, had had at once the tangible physical effect I had seen, and were struggling now to force their way through to his conscious mind.

It was during this strange hiatus, this for me mysterious and tragic interval, and before there was time for either of us to relax our gaze, that there came, from *him* to *me* this time, detaching itself as visibly to my eyes, in words, so that he, watching, saw it come, marked its passage, and knew the instant it reached me—what seemed a direct response, in eight unmistakable words, "*And I shall deliver your message for you!*"

It was in that moment that the full import of my thought became first apparent to him, and his equally apparent to me. For I knew—and he was aware of my knowing—what message I should most want to send, and to whom.

Of the message itself he knew nothing whatever, and it was plain in his face that he waited that instant for me to speak; that he, for whom such an experience had never before befallen, believed it all due to some strange power of mine. For neither of us doubted our sense of what was taking place. It is only the things we are told that we doubt.

So strong was his expectation, so strong, too, my own urge to speak, that I felt for the moment that I must already have cried out or made some demonstration. Instead, I held rigidly silent while we gazed, shaken and startled, into each other's eyes.

And suddenly there came upon us both an awful embarrassment, as if we had gone too far. Simultaneously we turned our eyes away. Simultaneously we brought them back again. In vain we tried to pretend that nothing had taken place. He affected to be absorbed in folding up his newspaper, and I in watching the guard at the other end of the car. But a moment later I surprised his intense puzzled gaze fixed upon me, and had again, from a source so deep within him that he had never known it was there, the sense of his offer repeated, "*And I shall deliver your message for you.*"

This time he seemed to entreat some explanation, for he was as mystified as I as to who had appointed him upon so extraordinary a mission. How could he know that my heart had been full of a certain message—a message to one I had loved, and who died? . . . A thing I would have given anything in the world to have said . . . the thing I had left so cavalierly unsaid until it was too late . . . that old ignorant cruelty whose barb I had prayed for the chance of withdrawing . . . something I need not tell

here. Need not, because it was between me and that other who died, alone; and to tell it, without telling everything—and that I should have no right to do—would be meaningless. But you will understand the kind of message I mean, for no one is so fortunate as to escape this tragic experience.

We all have a message like that put away in our hearts—something we failed to say, or something perhaps that we *said* one day that we want, oh so much, to take back, to say we didn't mean; something we failed miserably to understand, just at the last perhaps, and which we comprehended too late. . . . Mine was like that—and more. It wakened me in the night, filled the black hours with regret, stabbed straight to the heart of my joys. Yet a messenger waited to take the word that promised peace to my soul—and I could not give that word.

Our strange embarrassment grew, each of us seeming aware that we were in the midst of something which might on another day have passed for the vaguest of intuitions. And the people about us there in the train, engrossed in themselves, saw nothing, heard nothing, felt nothing, and their indifference created for us a kind of solitude, an extraordinarily complete isolation, which insured us against intrusion or curiosity.

Our eyes avoided and sought each other by turns, and his face took on for me a poignant familiarity, an intimate meaning, which increased momentarily until it was more familiar to me than the faces of life-long friends. . . .

Like a sleeper wakened at the crucial moment of a dream, I heard the voice of the guard call, "Hundred and Eighty-first Street next!"

I closed my book which still lay open on my lap; fastened my wrap.

Without looking, I knew that he too was preparing to leave the train. He took up the brown gloves and drew them carefully on, folded his paper and put it away in his pocket, then shook out and refolded his brown overcoat, and hung it, lining out, across his arm. And all the time he was pretending not to have noticed *my* preparations to go.

There is no explaining the pretense and self-consciousness that made me, who felt myself to have been the aggressor, hurry out the nearest exit the instant the doors of the car were opened, and cover the distance to the stairway as if I were being pursued, never looking back, losing myself in the stream of people which poured from all the exits of the train.

Perhaps I sought relief from an experience which called upon so many unused responses; perhaps I had some involuntary desire to relieve him of a responsibility he could not understand, or perhaps I hoped by my indifference, my sudden rousing to every-day haste, to convince him that it had all been a fantastic idea of his own, a trick of his imagination, with which I had had nothing whatever to do. Then, too, it may be that I wished to relieve myself of culpability in the matter of his death—not that I felt I had hastened his going, but that I had hastened his knowledge of it, and robbed him of the peaceful and happy days that might otherwise have been this day and that.

Reaching the elevators in the fore of the crowd which surged up the stairs, I was swept in bodily when the doors clanged back to receive us. The crowd flowed steadily in, filling the big elevator, and forcing me, whether I wished or not, against the side, flowed past me then packing the space at the front; and presently, although I had been first in, and he almost the last, I saw him, taller than any man there, come slowly in, and by some curious swirling movement of that densely packed crowd, he was swept in to my very side, so close I could feel the brown overcoat on his arm crushed against me, wedged there, locked in that sudden proximity so that we could not move.

And though we were both almost painfully aware of that contact, and though I could follow him to the point of feeling

that it was a breach of courtesy not in some way to respond, to acknowledge the word that had passed between us—yet we dared not in that first moment encounter each other's eyes, make any sign.

But a second later, with a queer deliberate movement of decision, he bent his head and looked straight down into my eyes. That instant I thought we were lost—I do not know how, but lost! For it was a thing between spirit and spirit—that look, searching, revealing, withdrawn again in affright.

He had opened his lips to speak, and now as if unable to recall his voice, he spoke, even beginning a word of what he must first have intended to say, but breaking it off to save himself with the most casual stranger's phrase:

"Crowded, isn't it, close . . ."

Only the words were obvious, for the tone was meant for something else. At the sound my head actually swam, for that conventional phrase had acknowledged so much, proved so much, and told by what tremendous effort of will he had determined to give me my chance.

And then I heard my own voice, thin and uncertain, responding:

"Very close, yes, very crowded . . ."

That was all, and I stood with locked lips, holding my breath, despising myself, for my voice had been cold, conventional—all that he had too late tried to put into his.

He had made his trial and failed. I had made mine, and failed more miserably still.

The elevator came to a stop, the doors clanged open again, and again the close-packed crowd surged out, separating us, driving him on ahead—so that he was half way up the stairs before I had reached the first step.

And when I reached the open air he was half way down the block. I think it gave him a kind of shock when he turned, as he presently did, squarely, with another of those definite movements of decision, to see me coming so close behind. I am sure the same thought lay in our minds—the coincidence of our ways lying in the same direction, and I think too that we both expected some absurd continuation of that coincidence, such as the discovery that we lived next door, or in the same apartment house.

I watched to see if he turned at my corner, the next; but arriving there, he went on past, with only the merest glance back, in spite of himself, to see if I followed still.

As I, reaching the end of the block, turned to cross the street, he, again half way down the block, seemed to sense my deflection, and looked back over his shoulder to watch me out of sight. And at that distance I could see the half-wistful, half-stricken, but wholly undaunted look of his eyes. He stood there tall against the glow of the evening sky, like a man who in the moment of receiving a mortal wound had received also a bright, an incomprehensible vision of things to come. . . .

At dinner that night they chaffed me about my preoccupation. It may have been out of some wish to test myself that I said, "I've had a—well, an adventure, to-night—on the way home." And then, suddenly I saw the measure of their interest so full, their expectation so heavy, that I knew I should never be able to tell it at all, and I could only affect an abrupt and unaccountable reticence, inventing excuses which only further convinced them that I had had some absurd romantic adventure, which, for fear of their laughter, I had at the last moment decided not to tell.

It was two weeks after our first encounter that I saw him again. This time too the scene was the subway—except that it was another hour of the day, and, consequently, the subway entirely another kind of place. Also, this time I was not alone.

I had been down town with Aunt Martin, and we were coming up early, in the lull, about three o'clock in the afternoon. There was no one else in our

car, and when we reached a Hundred and Eighty-first Street only one other person left the train.

As we stepped to the platform I saw him leaving the car ahead, the tall unmistakable figure in the overcoat of tobacco brown. I saw him give one glance in my direction, one glance at Aunt Martin who walked at my side, accept her, and then go on up the steps that led to the elevator.

I saw that he was stooped, and leaned heavily upon his stick, and the brown overcoat hung a little limp as if he had begun to shrink. His height was more noticeable now, more pronounced, and his slenderness was no longer slenderness, but thinness, almost emaciation.

He was old, undeniably, grievously old, and he looked as if he would go all at once, veritably die of old age, for nothing else seemed to have beset him, no illness, no grave disorder.

Yet—I wonder if I can make it plain—there was something added. The things that were taken away were of the physical body alone, and of them he was less conscious than of the things that were added. It seemed that death now beguiled him as life had beguiled him before.

He walked so slowly that we passed him on the stairs and went on ahead into the waiting elevator. He followed us in, trying not to look our way—trying, it came over me, for my sake, not to involve me again. I know, for I found myself doing the very same thing, avoiding his eyes, looking away, so as to relieve him of any obligation I might, upon our first encounter, have caused him to feel.

He stood a moment waiting for the elevator to start, but as something appeared to have detained the operator outside, and the seconds lengthened to an interminable minute and went on to another, he seemed suddenly to give up, under the intensity of too great stress, all pretense of indifference, and looked over at me with an abrupt beseeching directness, as if he besought me, for the peace of my soul as well as his own, to give him my message and have done with it.

And I, who had told myself and believed that if ever this moment came I should be able to conquer my cowardice, did precisely the thing I had done before—stood perfectly still, in an agony of silence, so much desiring to speak that I could imagine I heard the sound of my voice, believed I was already saying the words, and felt my hand outstretched to touch his sleeve. For I had long before put my message into words.

The elevator had begun to move slowly upward.

I could not take my eyes from that pitifully grayed and terribly familiar face. The small square space seemed filled with our silence. Never in my life have I wanted anything so much as to be able to speak—to *break* that silence, for it was a concrete actual thing which had to be broken.

Overcome suddenly with a curious weariness, he sat down on the narrow bench that ran along the side; and we had all of us actively to guard against some manifestation, some revelation so immediately imminent as to inspire us with a kind of fear. It was more than we were ready for—more than, for the good of the actualities we had still to cope with, we could afford to know. The tension of that moment could not have endured, and the elevator coming slowly to a stop, gave it an end.

We waited, Aunt Martin and I, for him to rise and make his way out. And again he went up the stairs before me; again he hesitated just at the top as if he would look back, but went on instead as if he resigned himself, after all, to the inevitable mystery.

We followed in silence, and as we reached the street Aunt Martin glancing quickly after the brown-coated figure half way down the block, said, "How queerly he looked at you."

"Who?" I said, startled in spite of myself.

"That old gentleman," she said.

"Yes," I said, "you noticed that?"

She seemed to be thinking, and I, with an unaccountable access of self-consciousness, took her arm, saying there was something I wished to buy at the shop across the street. She allowed herself to be piloted across at an angle, until we paused midway for a motor to pass, and then, "You didn't *know* him, did you?" she asked.

"No," I said. "What made you think that?"

"I hardly know—except that I thought all the time he was going to speak—going to say something—to you."

The motor had passed and we moved on. As we stepped up on the curb she said, with a sharp glance at my face and another over her shoulder in the direction he had gone, "Do you know, he seemed very—strange. I shouldn't somehow have been surprised if—if—"

She seemed to wish me to help her out.

"If what?" I asked, fearing to show how much I dwelt upon what she might say.

"Well, if he had died."

I think she must have caught from her side a glimpse of my expression, and sensed from that something that kept her from going on. Or it may be that my lack of response made what she had said suddenly absurd in her own eyes. But my mind was too chaotic for any reply, no matter what she thought.

We had reached the shop. As I held the door open for her to pass in, I gave one last hurried look, and saw him far down the street just turning from *his* last look to walk slowly on, leaning more heavily still on his walking stick.

It could have been no more than two weeks after that when, impelled by nothing more unusual than a desire to breathe the fresh air, I went for a walk about the neighborhood.

Conscious of no direction at all, I zigzagged along block after block until I came presently to a street less familiar to me than the rest. Turning the corner to discover what lay beyond, I stopped suddenly short, pierced through by I know not what vague alarm.

Across the street, drawn up before an apartment house, stood a black hearse, its silver trimmings flashing in the morning sun. And from the entrance of the house black-garbed men were bearing an ebony coffin.

Perhaps it was its unusual length, perhaps it was a certain characteristic fastidiousness in the lines of that polished black box—but I choose to believe it was none of these visual things that made me know who lay within.

Remorse struck at my heart, blinded my sight, grew acuter than any pain.

He had gone—irretrievably gone! And my message remained unsent! Remained in my heart to forever convict me of lack of faith—in him—in myself—in everything. How he must at the last have scorned me—have pitied me!

At the thought of his pity a strange thing took place in my heart. It was as if a way had been opened for an amazing, a miraculous balm to enter and steal away all my pain and remorse.

I waited, bewildered, not knowing what it could mean. And then, like a soundless voice, straight and clear through the bright air it came, "*We need not have troubled so much, for I have delivered your message, my friend!*"

Call it delusion if you will. Ask how I know it was he. Well, I never saw him afterward, and I should have seen him if he had lived. Ask how I know that. I cannot tell you, but I know. And if I wished for greater proof, I should find it surely in this: The old remorse no longer eats at my heart, no longer stabs my laughter and my joys. Where my undelivered message rankled day and night, there now is peace. Is that not miracle enough?

And now whenever I call to mind that small company of true and precious friends with whom my life has been enriched, there is among them always a tall figure in tobacco brown, and I see again that poignantly familiar face.

OUT FRONT

THOSE TEMPERAMENTAL AUDIENCES

BY ROBERT BENCHLEY

WHILE the ushers are banging up seats and salvaging white kid gloves after a theatrical performance, the audience is given to passing loud and specific judgments on the play and players as it waddles slowly up the aisle toward the exits. This is only fair. Having paid much more for its seats than they could possibly be worth, the public should at least be accorded the right to criticize what it has bought. I have never yet overheard an intelligent remark made on a play by members of a departing audience but, profound or not, the right to make comments on the cast is included in the price of the ticket.

What the audience does not realize, however, is that at the same moment the actors back-stage are indulging in a reciprocal volley of criticism as they slap on the cold cream. In the dressing rooms it is the audience itself that is under discussion. It was "great" or "tough" according to the degree of its enthusiasm. It was "sitting on its hands" if it was stingy with its applause. The vocabulary of critical terms applied by actors to audiences is less elaborate than that used in the dramatic departments of the daily press, but it is none the less searching.

We all know the audience's side of the question. We all know what makes a play worth seeing or a performance poor. But what is it that makes an audience fall down on the job? Given a play which has been proven effective by the vociferous approbation of seven audiences during the week, what is there about the eighth audience that renders it dull and heavy and incapable of a similar appreciation of exactly the same scene? I might as well end this article right here by confessing that I don't know, and I doubt very much if anyone does. But I do know that something indefinable does exist which makes four or five hundred people apathetic one night and four or five hundred others enthusiastic the next, and that, whatever it is, I shouldn't be surprised if it were the key to what's wrong with the world. For I assume that something is.

There are, of course, certain nights on which the apprehensive performer may expect no approbation at all from the front of the house. These nights—through years of running true to form—have become by-words of gloom in the theatrical profession. For some of them one may detect a reason. Others remain mysteries even to those who accept them as hoodoos.

Monday night, for example, is terrible. As a rule Monday-night audiences seem to have gone to a great deal of bother and expense to get dressed up and tear down to the theater for no other purpose than to sit and make things unpleasant for the actors. They are comparatively few in numbers and very lethargic. One would think that after a day of prayer and fasting, or whatever it is the people do on Sunday, there would come a joyous and whole-hearted abandonment to such wordly joys as those of the theater. It may be that each Monday most people resolve to start fresh and save money,

get to bed early, and catch up on their reading during the coming week—a resolution which is sometimes in force even as late as Wednesday. This, however, would not account for the anæsthetic quality of those renegades who do attend the theater on Monday night. It is not only that business is bad on the first night in the week, but that what business there is might much better have stayed at home.

The exact reverse is, of course, true of Saturday night. You might expect that. A hard week behind them and a long Sunday-morning sleep ahead, and small wonder that the citizenry crowd out into the streets bent on merry-making and laughter at anything. Every entertainment in town, no matter how thin, can count on selling out on Saturday night to a crowd of hair-trigger, eager enthusiasts who don't seem to care what they are seeing so long as a curtain goes up and down. This Saturday-night gala spirit is easy to explain. The Monday-night gloom is more mysterious. What happens between Monday and Saturday is a gamble, with the odds favoring the latter half of the week.

And here is where the tricky work starts. Somewhere between Monday and Saturday certain psychic forces (I shall mention no names) are at work to throw one audience into a state of twelve-ton depression and another audience into a high-class frenzy. What makes it so uncanny is that the state of mind, whatever it may be, is usually the same all over town. The whole theater-going public seems to be under the spell of the same *Geist*, laughing or moping with common accord.

Let us say for example that on a Wednesday night, right in the midst of a successful and lively week, the performers (quite unsuspecting) go on and discover that they are confronted by an indifference which amounts to open hostility. It is almost a sure bet that, on checking up with members of the casts of other plays in town, it will be found that the pall was equally heavy over their houses. Something was in the air, an all-pervading spirit of gloom which seeped into the theaters along Broadway and rendered audiences heavy and unresponsive even in playhouses which ordinarily ring nightly with hilarious laughter.

The same thing sometimes happens merely in the matter of attendance. All of a sudden one night, with weather and economic conditions perfect, the New York public will decide, in its individual homes, *not* to go to the theater that night, and the inter-box-office system of communication which exists between theater-treasurers will flash the news along the line, at nine o'clock, that business is terrible everywhere—for no reason at all.

What is it that keeps twenty-five or thirty thousand people away from the theater on Wednesday night and sends them crowding in on Thursday, regardless of the weather? What is it that makes Wednesday-night's audience reject *in a body* a scene which Thursday-night's audience receives with loud acclaim? It may be the action of the moon or the tides. It may be the Gulf Stream. It is a problem in group psychology the answer to which escapes me for the moment.

Of course, there *are* times when bad business and bad spirits can very definitely be expected and accounted for. The week preceding Christmas and the week following the payment of the income-tax installment are sure-fire depressants. Christmas week (except for plays catering to the school vacationists) is the rock on which many a production crashes. Nobody has money for theater-tickets. And the few hardy and solvent theater-goers who do brave the income tax and Christmas shopping are not buoyant enough to make it an easy job to bring a smile to their sunken cheeks. They just sit. The climax of an actor's trials comes on Christmas Eve, when all the world should be merry. He is faced by a handful of homeless and depressed expatriates and foot-loose revellers, and the whole thing might much better never have been tried at all.

Oddly enough, New Year's Eve is also a tough night for the performer. This is contrary to the general belief, fostered by the fact that lots of people go to the theater on New Year's Eve. But a large audience can be just as "tough" as a small one—tougher, because there are more people to fight. The reasons for the antagonism of New Year's Eve audiences, however, are not so subtle. In the first place, they have paid probably eleven or fifteen dollars for each of their seats. This is due to the particularly unsagacious custom among theatrical managers of raising the price of their seats on that night. As in the case of opening nights of big revues, the management has some naïve idea that the more people pay for their seats the better they are going to like the show. I should like some night to get one of these managers up on the stage with a new line of gags and have him try to make one of his eleven-dollar audiences laugh. Of course the answer is that whether they laugh or not the management has the eleven dollars, and eleven dollars is eleven dollars. But it is the performer who pays, and with his heart's blood.

My personal acting career included one New Year's Eve performance. With the rather pitiful optimism of the novice I had been looking forward to it all through the rough sledding of Christmas Week. "New Year's Eve is coming," I said to myself (I sometimes soliloquize, old-fashioned as it may be), "and they will be in fine form out front. I shall probably knock them off their seats." One gets to talk like that after a certain time (two weeks) on the stage. One is always "knocking them off their seats," especially in conversation with others in the profession.

New Year's Eve came and I was in a high state of anticipation. I had some idea of going to the management after the rioting had ceased and saying, "Look here, Sam. You heard them to-night. That ought to be worth a little more a week to you than the nominal salary you are paying me now." And I knew that Sam would see the justice of my argument.

I shall never forgive my colleagues for not telling me what it was going to be like. Usually those who have been on earlier in the program come back to the dressing room and report on the state of mind of the audience. "They're nice out there to-night," or "They're tough" is the customary formula. Then you know what to expect.

But my dear buddies made no reports this time. However, I didn't even ask. I was confident. Everyone knew what a New Year's Eve audience was. Easy pickings. So on I went, like a racing whippet just released.

The audience was all there. Every seat was taken and they were standing up at the back. Very dressy they were. Splendid people. But in one second I realized that something was wrong. (It is something you get immediately, this verdict from the front, yes or no. To-night it was a "no" as loud as if they had all stood up and shouted it in chorus.) Taking it easy at first, I had some idea of warming them up as I went along. Since then I have tried warming up Niagara Falls in winter and found it much easier. Instead of warming up, they congealed progressively as my efforts increased. Perhaps this wasn't New Year's Eve after all. Perhaps I had miscalculated and it was only December 30th. Possibly (you never can tell about a New York audience) their New Year came later in the calendar. Whatever the reason was, it was certain that I had a houseful of auditors whose single thought was "And what are *you* doing here?"

After eight minutes, which some bad fairy touched with a wand and turned into eight hours, I crawled off to change my collar and go home and lie down. The others were waiting for me, smiling. "Well, how were they, you liar?" they asked. "And a Happy New Year to *you*, too," I said simply, and fainted.

There is one other explanation, besides the eleven dollars, for the lack of co-

operation of holiday audiences. A holiday audience is notoriously festive, but it is festive subjectively, if I may drag Hegel into the discussion. It is in a condition to amuse itself, not to be amused. There is a funny man to every theater party on a holiday night, and he is working in direct competition with the funny man on the stage. Most of the patrons are in the theater on New Year's Eve because it is the accepted place to go and sit while waiting for midnight, and the performers on the stage mean no more to them than the cabaret show in a French café. There is an idea abroad that a group of people who have been drinking are easier to amuse than those who are cold sober. They constitute probably the worst audience in the world.

This question of alcoholic content in an audience is an important one in the psychology of after-dinner speaking and entertaining. Not only is there the initial hilarity to contend with, but there is also the subsequent depression when the vine leaves begin to drop out of the wearer's hair and he sinks into the slough. Phil Baker in the Music Box Revue a couple of years ago had what is known as a bad "spot" or position on the program. His material, the nature of which had been proved successful, seemed to be suffering from some outside obstruction along about 9:15, when he went on. It was suggested that one reason might be that along about 9:15 comes that "*heure bleu*" when all good dinner-cocktails die and go to heaven, leaving the subject an empty shell to whom suicide seems the only release from the world and its futility. There may be nothing in this theory; but the fact is that Mr. Baker's "spot" was changed and in his place was substituted a spectacular number which made no demands on the turgid faculties of the audience other than that of keeping the eyes partially open, and that the effect was immediate.

The varying moods of audiences may or may not be susceptible of several explanations, but there is only one explanation of the mental intercommunication between actor and audience, and that is the existence of actual psychic waves through the intervening air. This system is more delicate and more easily disarranged than the parts of a radio set. There is a complete process of give-and-take, so finely adjusted that the slightest unpropitious sound or motion will upset the entire play of waves or notes, or whatever the favorite unit of measurement is in mental circles. A half-second of wandering in the actor's mind, a tiny disturbance in the receiving apparatus of the audience, and the illusion of five minutes may be lost.

Noises are, of course, the most elementary form of distraction. No one will be surprised to hear that the sound of a seat banging down or one of those dandy blasting explosions with which New York shakes hourly breaks the contact between actor and audience. But sometimes the sounds are so slight that you don't know you have heard them. If I may do so without sounding like an actor, I will revert again to my own fleeting experience behind the footlights because, being green at the thing, I was wide-eyed with astonishment at every manifestation of what must be an old and accepted story to real professionals. My appearance was limited nightly to eight minutes, and in the course of those eight minutes there was one point at which, night after night, I was met with a stony silence when I knew that there should have been a laugh—that is, provided those poor saps out front knew anything at all. It involved no particular gem of humor, this point, but it *was* amusing enough to draw down something better than it got. I thought it was funny when I wrote it in, and I'm no fool.

However, after a few weeks of failure with it I began to doubt my own judgment (one of the first things you learn to do on the stage) and decided to take it out of the act and laugh at it myself in the privacy of my own room. But one night I heard something for the first time. While I was in front of the curtain the dexterous stage-hands behind it were

setting the next scene and, although they were so quiet that I had never noticed them before, I did detect—just at the point where my favorite flop occurred—the very slight sound of a pulley rattling. The next night I listened and found that it came at exactly the same line as the night before—in other words, at my pet line. For three nights I checked this up, and sure enough, each time the pulley rattled ever so slightly just as I was coming down the stretch into what should have been the "big wow." At the next performance I tried bringing the line in half a minute earlier and, while the resultant laugh was not as big as I felt it should have been (it never is), it was big enough to justify my hunch and to cover up the sound of the pulley the next minute.

Now, I am sure that the audience did not consciously hear that pulley. I hadn't heard it myself until two or three weeks had passed. But there was enough of *something* set in motion to exert a pull on the audience's mind away from what was being said, and when a laugh is at stake any pull at all is fatal.

If this seems like straining a point, listen to the testimony of Roland Young, showing that not only will a sound break the connection, but a slight motion at the wrong time, drawing the audience's attention by the fraction of an inch, will have the same effect. In one of his roles there was a scene in which Mr. Young stepped to a table while saying a line and picked up a magazine, idly glancing through its pages as he spoke. He knew the line was funny but it did not get the desired effect. He tried reading it differently but the laugh did not come. Finally he realized that the flutter of the pages of the magazine as he drew his thumb across them, caught the audience's eye at just the moment when he needed it for himself. He delayed thumbing the pages until after he had spoken the line, and the house responded immediately.

As Exhibit C in the case let us take Mr. John Burke, whose vaudeville monologue of the drafted soldier is a succession of sure-fire laughs. Along toward the end of his act he recounts an experience of his when he was in a hospital in France. He had been wounded.

"When I woke up," he says, "I found the orderly measuring me with a tape measure.

"'What are you doing there?' I says.

"'Measuring you for a coffin,' he says.

"'Get away,' I says, 'there must be some mistake. I'm not dead.'

"'Lie down,' he says, 'do you want to make a fool out of the doctor?'"

As he said "Lie down," Mr. Burke made an impatient gesture to the side such as the orderly might have made and turned his head as if to look down at the patient.

Now this is a pretty funny story, as stories go, but something was wrong with it. Here again the audience, time after time, seemed a little hazy when it came time to laugh. So one night he omitted the turning of the head, simply gesturing as he said "Lie down" and looked straight at the audience the while. From then on the response was all that he could have wished. Simply by turning his head he had broken the contact!

If you believe this at all you will see how unfair it is to the performers for late comers to tramp down the aisle during a scene in which an individual is struggling single-handed to hold his audience and build up his effects. The work of two or three minutes of carefully planned audience-culture may easily be lost by even a single tardy one galumping down to his seat at the psychological moment and offering a distraction which, small as it is, is out of all proportion to his importance. If you enter the theater late (and you probably do) and see that someone on the stage is engaged in an attempt to capture that particular moment, you will be displaying uncommon sympathy if you will wait at the head of the aisle until the scene has become a little more diffused before going to your seat. Or you might even try getting to the theater on time.

But the most subtle factor of all in

keeping the audience with the performer is his own mental state. The line between success and failure here is so fine that it is almost impossible to regulate it. You may go on and do exactly the same things in exactly the same way one night as you did them successfully the night before and yet, if in one tiny corner of your mind you are thinking of something else, you will get no closer to your audience than you would if you were up in the attic talking down the stairs at them. That this is not due to the difference in the audience on the two nights is shown by the fact that the thing, whatever it is, can happen during a single performance. One minute you have them. The next you have lost them. And you can't always blame it on pulleys. A perfect example of this occurred on that now-famous night in the history of the American theater when I discovered that the pulley was killing my line. Up to that point the audience was very gracious and easy to please. When I heard the pulley I said to myself, "That's what's the trouble. It's that pulley. To-morrow night I'll try placing the line a little earlier," and although there was no pause in my polished delivery and no difference in my manner, the fact that I was making little plans in the back of my head about to-morrow night lost me the rest of *that* night. Like a flash the audience let go, and from that moment until I slunk off I was working for strangers. They were like two different audiences, and undoubtedly I was like two, or perhaps three, different performers.

While this is not an article on therapeutics, no discussion of the give-and-take between audience and actor would be complete without some mention of the *élan vital* which the forces out front send rushing across the footlights to the actor. It is almost impossible for a performer to be ill while on the stage, unless it be from some critical disarrangement of organs calling for an immediate major operation. You may be standing in the wings waiting to go on and feel that you are about to die. Fever may be raging about your ears and aches and pains grinding your bones. Yet when you step out on the stage and receive a charge of whatever it is that comes across the lights, and give out whatever it is that you send in return—everything disappears, and for the duration of the scene you are a comparatively well man.

A year or two ago at the stage door of the Harris Theatre I saw Otto Kruger being helped from his automobile to his dressing-room, supported by his man on one side and a cane on the other. He had been suffering from a painful and complicated illness ever since "The Nervous Wreck" opened. An hour later I saw him bounding about the stage, knocking over trays of dishes, shooting revolvers, leaping from chair to chair, and beaming with health. He was so full of health that it was ridiculous. And the more the audience screamed with laughter the healthier he got. At midnight I saw him again being helped into his automobile, mumbling with pain.

This, together with the temporary cure of headache, grippe, and other minor ailments under the galvanizing influence of a healthy audience, may be laid to mental healing, thought transfusion, witchcraft, or the legendary divinity inherent in democracy. Whatever it may spring from, the fact remains that it exists and that it is simply a part of the mysterious co-relation of mind and spirit which exists between actor and audience and makes of a theatrical performance an exhibition of team-work in which the entertained are of equal importance with the entertainers. If the audience are there, the show is there. Like the tree in the textbook, crashing noiselessly in an empty forest, if a joke falls on unsympathetic ears it automatically ceases to be funny. It is the mental state of the audience which makes a play good or bad at any given moment and, as we have seen that the mental state of an audience changes from Monday to Tuesday, from ten o'clock to five minutes past ten, it will be understood why so many actors go crazy.

AMERICA, ENGLAND, AND WORLD AFFAIRS

BY ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE

IN SETTING pen to paper on the subject of this article, the writer has an uneasy feeling that he may be committing an impertinence. Is it really possible to appraise the international position of a great country in which one has been a mere passing visitor? Obviously, the visitor who attempts this task will be blind to many points of prime importance and will fall into many egregious mistakes which will leap to the eye of the American reader. On the other hand, he may be vividly impressed by points which Americans take so much for granted that they are barely conscious of them. Moreover, an English visitor can put forward two additional pleas. The first is that England, during the past century, has been through some of the experiences which America is undergoing now, so that an English observer, with some knowledge of his own country's history, is perhaps better equipped for appreciating the present international position of the United States than an observer from a country with no common historical background. The second ground on which an English observer may presume is that, besides this analogy from the past, there is every prospect that, in the future, American foreign policy will affect profoundly, for good or evil, the international position of Great Britain. With these apologies, the present writer takes the plunge into commonplaces, in the hope that these may lead on to considerations of common interest to himself and to his readers.

The first of these commonplaces (a commonplace, that is, to Americans, though a wonder to the rest of the world) is the unparalleled standard of living which prevails in America to-day, or perhaps it is more accurate to say, the unparalleled consumption per head of material values (for "standards of living" are subjective, and it may be questioned whether the average individual American man, woman, or child feels more comfortable, on the whole, than corresponding individuals in Europe whose average consumption is so markedly inferior). Continental Europeans, when they visit England, are so much struck by the relatively higher standard of consumption in England that they are apt to class England and America together in this respect; but when an Englishman in his turn visits America he is struck at least as forcibly by the difference between the American standard and his own. In fact, America is as extravagant compared to England as England is compared to the European Continent; and though the prevalent standard of consumption in America does not date back many decades, it appears to an English observer that almost all living Americans already take this standard for granted, and that the American people, as a whole, would violently resent any lowering of it.

The second commonplace is that this unparalleled standard of consumption is made possible only by an unparalleled volume of production, and that this volume depends principally upon two things—partly, of course, upon the American national character, with its energy, ingenuity, and initiative, but also upon the immense latent natural

resources which a virgin continent has poured out of her cornucopia into the American people's lap.

The third commonplace is that the greater part of this vast and wealthy continental domain has been acquired by the American people with comparative ease, without their path being seriously crossed by other nations. It is true that the first phase cost the ancestors of the native-born elements in the present American nation tremendous efforts. The struggle to secure a foothold on the Atlantic seaboard; the struggle to prevent the seaboard from being encircled by the French in the hinterland; the struggle to throw off the sovereignty of the British Crown and Parliament—all this occupied nearly two hundred years (during which, it may be, the foundations of the American national character were laid by a very severe process of natural selection). But that strenuous phase in which the destinies of America were fought out in the arena of international politics came to an end nearly a century and a half ago; and the remaining four-fifths of the present territory of the Union have been acquired, by contrast, with extraordinary facility. There was the amazing windfall of the Louisiana Purchase, which not only doubled the territory of the United States as it stood at the opening of the nineteenth century, but finally exempted North America from being a battlefield in European struggles for power. There were the hardly less considerable additions of territory obtained by the admission of Texas into the Union and by the annexations after the easy victory in the Mexican War. There were the Gadsden Purchase and the purchase of Alaska from the Tzar. Never, perhaps, has so great a territory, so richly endowed with natural resources, been acquired by one nation with so little opposition or competition on the part of others.

This second phase of American history, which has just come to an end, has induced in the American people a special and definite national habit of mind which it may be difficult for Americans themselves to view from outside but which is striking enough to any non-American observer. For the past one hundred and fifty years, the American people's national territory has always been so much more extensive than what they could occupy effectively that the national frontiers lay beyond the horizon of the pioneers, while foreign nations, and the possible relations of the American people with those nations at some distant future date, lay even beyond these invisible frontiers in a limbo so remote that their existence hardly impressed itself on the American consciousness. During this latter phase the American people have been absorbed in the task of developing the immense wealth of their newly acquired national estate; their eyes have been turned inward; their faculties have been specialized in making the most of natural resources which were incontestably their property; and, in making the most of them, they have had no other nations to consider. They have inherited, with a virgin continent, a free hand to do as they liked with it; and the result is that, in peopling this continent and developing its resources in conflict, not with other nations of equal standing and ability, but only with savages and with Nature, they have got up an immense head of steam and a terrific momentum. The people as a whole have become accustomed to those unparalleled standards of consumption and production which at once strike the foreign observer's eye; and these standards have been made possible by the building up of unparalleled economic organizations—of bodies of technical skill and business experience and ability which are veritable Great Powers in the economic world. Meanwhile, in all this process of growth at an increasing rate, the American nation has been approaching, at a gathering speed, nearer and nearer to those frontiers which had seemed immeasurably remote only a few generations before.

Since the War of 1914–1918 a new phase has begun, for the American people have suddenly not merely caught up with their frontiers but leaped far beyond them—and possibly this is not yet a commonplace, since at the present time a majority of Americans (or so, at least, it appears to an English observer) are denying that things are not just as they were before the war as vehemently as most Englishmen are denying that England is no longer an island. Nevertheless, from an objective standpoint, the new fact is attested by unmistakable signs. The United States has become a great lending country instead of a great borrower; and the great American business organizations, which were built up in the development of the American people's own resources inside their own frontiers, are now operating far and wide over the world. After a century and a half of comparative isolation, Americans are again coming into intimate contact with other nations; and this is happening because their own country, vast and wealthy though it is, can no longer contain that volume of energy which its owners have developed in the process of breaking it in.

II

This brings up the central question of the present article: What is going to be the national temper of the American people in the entirely new situation which has come upon them like a thief in the night? It must be reiterated that this situation has no precedent in their national experience; for during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when they were still involved in the currents and storms of European affairs, the American people were not yet a Great Power, while during the last one hundred and fifty years, when they have been growing in stature, they have been living a life apart. To-day, for the first time in her history, the United States is involved as a Great Power in the intricacies of world affairs. While growing in stature, has she grown in wisdom too?

From now onwards, the demand which will be made upon the political wisdom of the American people will be heavy. Henceforward, in their increasingly large transactions with Nature, they will find themselves involved more and more in transactions with foreign Man; for they will be dealing more and more in economic activities abroad, and there they cannot enjoy that freedom from human complications to which they have become accustomed while developing their own national domain. Instead of living and working in an international vacuum, they will have to rub shoulders with other nations as part of their daily round and common task. Will they be patient under these new conditions? To begin with, they will find that difficult, for the virtue of patience is acquired by laborious experience. During the last century and a half Americans have learned to be patient with Nature—to chop down forests with the hand ax and to wrestle with mechanical problems until they have yielded the secret of their solution; but possibly they may have forgotten—through long lack of experience—how to be patient with their fellow-men. They have not shown themselves patient with Red Indians or Mexicans when these have stood in the pioneer's way. Will they have remembered how to deal with nations which, at least juridically, are their peers and which therefore cannot be treated with a high hand without courting international conflicts of disastrous violence?

Let us take a hypothetical case of a concrete kind. One day, sooner or later, the curve of increasing production, by American enterprise, of mineral oil throughout the world may cease to rise in proportion to the growing demand of American automobile-owners for gasoline; and, if and when that happens, the price of gasoline per gallon will begin to go up, slowly but surely, cent by cent. By that time—almost *ex hypothesi*—the production of oil within the frontiers of the United States will have been forced up to its utmost capacity. If the threat-

ened restriction upon the mileage of automobile driving per annum in the United States is to be averted by arresting the tendency for the price of gasoline to rise, that will only be possible by increasing production by American enterprise in foreign countries; and here, at once, the human factor of international relations will come in. Suppose, for example, that vast undeveloped oil reserves are known to exist in certain sovereign independent Latin-American countries just outside the present zone of ascendency of the United States in the Caribbean; there may well be a sharp divergence of view on the subject between the American public and the peoples of these countries.

"If," the Colombians and Venezuelans may argue, "we gave the great American oil interests that free hand to develop our oil reserves which they enjoy in their own country, that might possibly put money into our pockets as well as into theirs; but it is still more probable that, incidentally, it would cost us our political independence in fact if not in name. In a few years we might find ourselves in the same political position as Panama or Haiti. No, thank you. We prefer retaining our full political sovereignty to obtaining royalties on our oil (which, after all, will keep till we are able to develop it ourselves). If, meanwhile, the owners of automobiles in the United States cannot drive so fast or so far as they are accustomed to do, that does not concern us."

In face of such an attitude on their part, what would be the reaction of American public opinion? An English observer who has spent a Sunday in the country within a fifty-mile radius of New York City can imagine millions of American voices crying with one accord, "Because these dagoes are blind to the duty of developing their natural resources, shall New York City's Sunday procession of cars turn back before reaching Bear Mountain Bridge and the Storm King Highway? And shall we allow them to add insult to injury by the intolerable insinuation that the reason why they shut their doors in the face of American enterprise is because they are afraid of American Imperialism—a thing which does not exist?"

With the American public in this temper, would the American oil interests miss the opportunity of striking while the iron was hot? For them, after all, it might be a question, not of the mere curtailment of Sunday joy-rider, but of existence itself. The development of the oil industry within the frontiers of the United States has necessitated the sinking of a prodigious amount of capital in specialized plant and the training of a considerable number of particularly competent and active American citizens as well-remunerated experts in various branches of the business. Is the capital here locked up to be written off as loss and the human ability here given scope to be thrown out of lucrative employment while oil fields yet remain to be developed in any part of the world? In such circumstances it is not inconceivable to a foreign observer that the great American oil interests, with American public opinion behind them, might bring pressure to bear upon Congress and the Administration to deal as drastically with these Latin-American dogs-in-the-manger as their forefathers had dealt with Creeks who had attempted to bar the way to the Western cotton belt, or Algonquins and Sioux who had tried to keep another stream of American pioneers from penetrating the great Northwest. This hypothetical case is taken at random from among the many which occur to the imagination.

III

The foreign observer whose imagination runs on these lines must beg his American readers not to take it amiss. Such prognostications imply no special disparagement of the American national character. A student of history would expect any nation suddenly placed in this situation after being isolated for one

hundred and fifty years to be subject to imperialistic impulses (though not necessarily to succumb to them). For example, Baron Sonnino, the Italian statesman who crossed swords with President Wilson at the Peace Conference and who was also a student of history like the President himself, had a historical nightmare which he used (it is reported) to retail during the War whenever the prime ministers of the European Allied states met in conclave. The national states of modern Europe, he used to say, were like the city states of Ancient Greece. As the Greek cities had spent their energies in quarreling with one another in an earlier age when they were the only states in their world, so they continued to spend them when states of far greater caliber—Carthage and Rome—had arisen beyond the Western Sea. The "Cloud in the West" did not bring them to their senses, so they quarreled and quarreled till Rome stepped in and annexed them all. The modern Rome—and this was the Baron's nightmare—was the United States of America.

This learned parallel, no doubt, will raise a smile on most American faces. "We would not take Europe as a gift," most Americans will retort, "let alone going out of our way to annex it." Yet before the smile broadens into a laugh, let the American reader examine the history of Rome's relations with Greece, and he may conclude that the Baron's nightmare was less fantastic, after all, than it sounds at first hearing. At the beginning of the story, the Romans felt about Greece very much as the Americans feel about Europe now. They had a sentiment for Greek culture as the source of their own and at the same time a horror of becoming mixed up in Greek political quarrels; so, after intervening with decisive effect in one of the interminable Greek Wars in order to defend the weaker and more cultured Greek states against militaristic Macedonia, they solemnly proclaimed the liberty of Macedonia's former subject populations and then evacuated—with the firm intention of never becoming involved in Greek politics again. That, however, was the one thing that Rome could not achieve, for the Greeks themselves refused to let her alone. One and all, they came trooping to Rome to lay their grievances before the Senate—this city against that and that faction against the other—until at last the Roman Administration, weary of being pestered to give awards which were never obeyed, cut the knot by annexing Greece, bag and baggage. The Romans of that age, though reasonably well-intentioned, were not a patient people—no more patient, indeed, than Americans are to-day.

As a matter of fact, Baron Sonnino would have been nearer the mark if he had designated some region other than Europe—say, Latin America or the Pacific—as the scene on which the United States might play the part of Rome in modern times; and on this point an Englishman could have corrected him, for an Englishman can divine, from his own national experience, how strong the American's antipathy towards European entanglements really is. He realizes this because a century ago, at the close of the War of 1792–1815, England embarked on a new era with much the same feelings towards Europe as America entertains just now. At that time Englishmen, having saved Europe from Napoleon, wanted nothing better than to see the last of her and to concentrate all their thoughts and efforts upon conquering the commerce of the overseas world and garnering the fabulous wealth with which the Industrial Revolution had suddenly endowed them. The Channel then was as broad as the Atlantic is now—broad enough, that is, to serve as a very effective moat for the Englishman's castle—and England had a century's grace before the Channel dwindled to its present width (which is approximately that of the Rhine a century earlier). One day, no doubt, the Atlantic will become as narrow as the Channel (and it is safe to prophesy that

the inventor who brings about this disagreeable change in the situation of the United States, by devising some undreamed-of improvement in mechanical transport, will be an American citizen). Meanwhile, the Atlantic may be expected to remain a serviceable moat for many years to come; and, so long as this is so, every Englishman understands that the United States will keep as clear of Europe as England did from 1815 to 1914.

However, the point of the parallel between twentieth-century America and nineteenth-century England lies not in England's abstention from interference in Europe but in her opposite behavior in every other part of the world. During this golden century, when England was rejoicing in her freedom from European complications, she was conquering India and Burma, blowing China's door open with powder and shot, earmarking a lion's share of Africa, pushing across Canada from Atlantic to Pacific, and colonizing Australia and New Zealand at the opposite corner of the vaster ocean. In other words, the psychological inhibition, half rational and half instinctive, which restrained her from meddling in Europe, abandoned her completely when she had to deal with other regions; and this is just the psychology which an English visitor observes in Americans to-day. He notes and understands their resolve to have nothing to do with Europe; but he also notes and understands equally well that they have no such shrinking from playing an active part in the international politics of the Latin-American world or of the Pacific. And it is in her Pacific policy that the United States may affect the fortunes of England profoundly for evil or for good.

IV

Before discussing this point it may be convenient to reckon up roughly the assets which England has lost and retained, respectively, since the War of 1914–1918.

England's losses have been serious. First, she has lost the economic primacy which she had enjoyed during the century ending in 1914 as the reward of having been the first country to undergo the Industrial Revolution. Secondly, she has lost her strategic isolation. Both these unpleasant changes were inevitable sooner or later. Other nations were bound to catch up England's initial start in the race of industrial competition; and mechanical progress was bound to produce some invention like aircraft which would wipe out the Channel. The War precipitated these changes rather than caused them; but, in any case, they have taken effect, and England has to accommodate herself to them as best she may.

On the other hand, the assets which England still retains are not only of great but of increasing value. In the first place, she retains her position as the link between the European Continent, which is the homeland of Western civilization, and the countries overseas, in which the life of Western society will be lived henceforward in increasing measure; and as the population, prosperity, and power of the overseas countries grow, and the English-speaking members of the overseas world become more and more preponderant in it, England's role as a link will be magnified in like measure. Last year a very intelligent French visitor to England—an official on the Secretariat of the League of Nations at Geneva—when asked what was his most vivid impression in England, replied that, in setting foot in England, the Continental visitor for the first time became concretely aware of the existence of America. On the Continent, America was still a dim and almost mythical New World; in England, at every turn, he met people who had just come from America or were just going there, or who had American relatives or American business connections. *A fortiori*, England is the connecting link between Europe and those younger English-speaking countries which politically are

British Dominions. This is a British asset which is likely to increase in value as time goes on.

The second asset which England retains, though more precariously, is her position as a link between West and East. The British Commonwealth is the only body politic in the world to-day which comprises both a first-class European country like England and a first-class Oriental country like India, together with overseas communities of European origin like the self-governing Dominions. This asset carries with it heavy political liabilities, but at the same time a Commonwealth in which Westerners and Orientals live in free and equal partnership (supposing that the British Empire were able to establish such a commonwealth on an enduring basis) might be of supreme value to a world in which conflicts on cultural and racial lines are one of the principal dangers of the coming era. It is here, perhaps, that British statesmanship has its greatest opportunity of performing an international service, but it is also here that British foreign policy is most dependent on the foreign policy of the United States.

V

The political situation in the basin of the Pacific and the Indian Ocean is full of dangers. On one side lie some of the least thickly populated countries in the world—Canada, the United States, New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa—which happen also to be all the English-speaking countries in the World except the United Kingdom and the Irish Free State. On the other side lie some of the most congested countries—Japan China, Java, and India—which happen also to be inhabited by peoples of races and cultures with which the English-speaking peoples are utterly unwilling to blend, so that they would all resist to the uttermost an attempt on the Orientals' part to solve their problem of overpopulation by assisting the overseas peoples of European origin to fill up their empty spaces with Oriental immigrants. The danger of this situation is so notorious that there is no need to enlarge upon it; but it is perhaps worth pointing out that one of the chief safeguards against a disastrous explosion is the present position of the United Kingdom as the leading member of a composite commonwealth, in which representatives of both the opposing groups in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific are included. For example if India and South Africa were not both members of the British Commonwealth, they might at this moment be at war with each other over the question of restrictions placed by the South African Government upon Indian immigration. As it is, these two countries—alienated from each other though they are by a serious conflict of interest—are in a constitutional relationship which makes war between them impossible; and, more than this, they have as their common political partner the United Kingdom, which is particularly well placed for mediating between them—not only on account of its prestige as the senior partner in the Commonwealth, but because the United Kingdom lies far from the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, in a region where the contact of races and cultures is not a burning question. Because of this British statesmanship can handle the controversy between India and South Africa in an objective and impartial way and furthermore can make the two parties so thoroughly aware of its disinterestedness that they are less unwilling to accept its mediation than that of any other Power.

Thus, in the tense international politics of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, Great Britain is in a position to exercise a moderating and conciliatory influence; and it is her vital interest to exercise it to the utmost of her power, since, if once an armed conflict were to break out on racial lines, the British Commonwealth would be disrupted, and Englishmen would be confronted with the tragic choice of taking sides in a fratricidal struggle between their Indian and their

English-speaking fellow-citizens. Now the English of to-day are a relatively patient people in their dealing with other human beings—not from any innate virtue, but because they have made their way (since the never-forgotten experience which ended so disastrously for them in 1783) by competent handling other people, while the Americans have made their way by competently handling Nature. This acquired characteristic of patience in human affairs is the essence of statesmanship and, therefore, Great Britain has a part to play in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific which might be of the greatest benefit to all the peoples which live around their shores, on condition that the opportunity to fill this role is granted to British statesmanship.

This qualifying clause goes to the root of the matter, for, after all, the part which Great Britain at present plays in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, great though it is, is played by her only on sufferance. The British Isles, alone of the English-speaking countries, do not possess a seaboard on this central basin of the seas of the world, but are a small and distant archipelago on the farther edge of Europe. In the last resort, the fateful decisions involving amity or conflict will lie with the Powers on the spot, and first and foremost with the greatest of them—that is to say, with Japan on the Oriental side and with the United States on the side of the English-speaking world.

In this respect the question of what temper the American people will display in this new era in their history, when they are about to play an active role in international affairs as one of the greatest of the Great Powers, ceases to be a mere question of curiosity to the English observer and becomes for him a question in which the destinies of his own country may be involved. Will the American people, and their agents in Congress and in the Administration, be patient in their handling of this most formidable Pacific problem? The action of Congress in the spring of 1924, when they introduced the Oriental Exclusion clause into the Bill for the Restriction of Immigration, arouses some misgivings in an English observer's mind—not on account of what was done, but on account of the reckless manner in which Congress insisted upon doing it. No doubt, if the United States choses to pursue a harsh and provocative policy in the Pacific, she could take the initiative out of England's hands. The British Dominions, which all (unlike Great Britain herself but like the United States) are directly affected by the race and color problem, might readily be induced to follow the lead of the United States in taking drastic action. They, too, have not been schooled in patience; and, as smaller and younger English-speaking countries, they would drift naturally into the orbit of the largest and nearest member of the group. England might be reduced to the role of an impotent spectator while the United States led the Dominions into a racial war. Yet any such turn of events, while it would break up the British Commonwealth, would be scarcely less of a catastrophe for the United States when considered on a long view; and hence in this matter the interests of America, Great Britain, and the world are really identical.

It should be our common prayer that the American people may be blessed with the faculty of patience in their dealings with other nations in this new era when the United States is destined to play so momentous a part in international affairs.

THE ACTOR AND THE ALIBI

A STORY

BY G. K. CHESTERTON

MR. MUNDON MANDEVILLE, the theatrical manager, walked briskly through the passages behind the scenes, or rather, below the scenes. His attire was smart and festive, perhaps a little too festive: the flower in his buttonhole was festive; the very varnish on his boots was festive; but his face was not at all festive. He was a big, bull-necked, black-browed man, and at the moment his brow was blacker than usual. He had in any case, of course, the hundred botherations that besiege a man in such a position; and they ranged from large to small and from new to old. It annoyed him to pass through the passages where the old pantomime scenery was stacked because he had successfully begun his career at that theater with very popular pantomimes, and had since been induced to gamble in more serious and classical drama over which he had dropped a good deal of money. Hence to see the Sapphire Gates of Bluebeard's Blue Palace, or portions of the Enchanted Grove of Golden Orange Trees, leaning up against the wall to be festooned with cobwebs or nibbled by mice, did not give him that soothing sense of a return to simplicity which we all ought to have when granted a glimpse of that wonderland of our childhood. Nor had he any time to drop a tear where he had dropped the money, or to dream of this Paradise of Peter Pan; for he had been summoned hurriedly to settle a practical problem not of the past but of the moment. It was the sort of thing which does sometimes happen in that strange world behind the scenes; but it was big enough to be serious. Miss Maroni, the talented young actress of Italian parentage who had undertaken to act an important part in the play which was to be rehearsed that afternoon and performed that evening, had abruptly and even violently refused at the last moment to do anything of the kind. He had not even seen the exasperating lady yet; and as she had locked herself up in her dressing-room and defied the world through the door, it seemed unlikely for the present that he would. Mr. Mundon Mandeville was sufficiently British to explain it by murmuring that all foreigners were mad. But the thought of his good fortune in inhabiting the only sane island of the planet did not suffice to soothe him any more than the memory of the Enchanted Grove. All these things and many more were annoying; and yet a very intimate observer might have suspected that something was wrong with Mr. Mandeville that went beyond annoyance.

If it be possible for a heavy and healthy man to look haggard, he looked haggard. His face was full but his eye-sockets were hollow; his mouth twitched as if it were always trying to bite the black strip of mustache that was just too short to be bitten. He might have been a man who had begun to take drugs; but even on that assumption there was something which suggested that he had a reason for doing it; that the drug was not the cause of the tragedy, but the tragedy the cause of the

drug. Whatever was his deeper secret, it seemed to inhabit that dark end of the long passage where was the entrance to his own little study; and as he went along the empty corridor he threw back a nervous glance now and then, as if something might follow him besides his shadow.

However, business is business; and he made his way to the opposite end of the passage where the blank green door of Miss Maroni defied the world. A group of actors and other people involved were already standing in front of it, conferring and considering, one might almost fancy, the advisability of a battering-ram. The group contained one figure at least who was already well enough known, whose photograph was on many mantelpieces and his autograph in many albums. For though Norman Knight was playing the hero in a theater that was still a little provincial and old-fashioned and capable of calling him the first walking gentleman, he at least was certainly on the way to wider triumphs. He was a good-looking man with a long cleft chin and fair hair low on his forehead, giving him a rather Neronian look that did not altogether correspond with his impulsive and plunging movements. The group contained also Ralph Randall, who generally acted elderly character parts, who had a humorous hatchet face blue with shaving and discolored with grease-paint. It contained Mandeville's second walking gentleman, carrying on the not yet wholly vanished tradition of Charles's Friend—a dark, curly-haired youth of somewhat Semitic profile bearing the name of Aubrey Vernon. It included Mandeville's wife's maid, or dresser, a very powerful-looking person with tight red hair and a hard wooden face. It also incidentally included Mandeville's wife, a quiet woman in the background with a pale patient face the lines of which had not lost a classical symmetry and severity, but which looked all the paler because her very eyes were pale and her pale-yellow hair lay in two plain bands like some very archaic Madonna's. Not everybody knew that she had once been a serious and successful actress in Ibsen and the intellectual drama. But her husband did not think much of problem plays, and certainly at the moment was more interested in the problem of getting a foreign actress out of a locked room—a new version of the conjuring trick of the Vanishing Lady.

"Hasn't she come out yet?" he demanded, speaking to his wife's business-like attendant rather than to his wife.

"No, sir," answered in a somber manner the woman who was known as Mrs. Sands,

"We are beginning to get a little alarmed," said old Randall. "She seemed quite unbalanced and we're afraid she might even do herself some mischief."

"Hell!" said Mandeville in his simple and artless way. "Advertisement's very good, but we don't want that sort of advertisement. Hasn't she any friends here? Has nobody any influence with her?"

"Jarvis thinks the only man who might manage her is her own priest round the corner," said Randall; "and in case she does start hanging herself on a hat-peg, I really thought perhaps he'd better be here. Jarvis has gone to fetch him . . . and as a matter of fact here he comes."

Two more figures appeared in that subterranean passage under the stage; the first was Ashton Jarvis, a jolly fellow who generally acted villains but who had surrendered that high vocation for the moment to the curly-headed youth with the nose. Jarvis himself had a snub nose and something like a broad grin, but he was dark and could look tragic enough on the stage. The other figure was short and square and clad all in black; it was Father Brown from the church round the corner.

Father Brown seemed to take it quite naturally, and even casually, that he should be called in to consider the queer conduct of one of his flock, whether she

were to be regarded as a black sheep or only as a lost lamb. But he did not seem to think much of the suggestion of suicide.

"I suppose there was some reason for her flying off the handle like that," he said: "Does anybody know what it was?"

"Dissatisfied with her part, I believe," said the older actor.

"They always are," growled Mr. Mundon Mandeville. "And I thought my wife would look after those arrangements."

"I can only say," said Mrs. Mundon Mandeville rather wearily, "that I gave her what ought to be the best part. It's supposed to be what stage-struck young women want, isn't it—to act the beautiful young heroine and marry the beautiful young hero in a shower of bouquets and cheers from the gallery? Women of my age naturally have to fall back on acting respectable matrons, and I was careful to confine myself to that."

"It would be devilish awkward to alter the parts now, anyhow," said Randall.

"It's not to be thought of," declared Norman Knight firmly. "Why, I could hardly act—but anyhow it's much too late."

Father Brown had slipped forward and was standing outside the locked door listening, with his head a little on one side.

"Is there no sound?" asked the manager anxiously, and then added in a lower voice, "Do you think she can have done herself in?"

"There is a certain sound," replied Father Brown calmly. "I should be inclined to deduce from the sound that she is engaged in breaking windows or looking-glasses, probably with her feet. No, I do not think there is much danger of her going on to destroy herself. Breaking looking-glasses with your feet is a very unusual prelude to suicide. If she had been a German now and had gone away to think, to think quietly about metaphysics and *Weltschmerz* I should be all for breaking the door down. But these Italians don't really die so easily and are not liable to kill themselves in a rage. Somebody else, perhaps . . . yes, possibly . . . it might be well to take ordinary precautions if she comes out with a leap."

"So you're not in favor of forcing the door?" asked Mandeville.

"Not if you want her to act in your play," replied Father Brown. "If you do that she'll raise the roof and refuse to stay in the place; if you leave her alone she'll probably come out from mere curiosity. If I were you, I should just leave somebody to guard the door, more or less, and trust to time for an hour or two."

"In that case," said Mandeville, "we can only get on with rehearsing the scenes in which she doesn't appear. My wife will arrange all that is necessary for scenery just now. After all, the Fourth Act is the main business. You'd better get on with that."

"Not a dress rehearsal," said Mandeville's wife to the others.

"Very well," said Knight. "Not a dress rehearsal of course. I wish the dresses of the infernal period weren't so elaborate."

"What is the play?" asked the priest with a touch of curiosity.

"The School for Scandal," said Mandeville. "It may be literature, but I want plays. My wife likes what she calls classical comedies. A long sight more classic than comic."

At this moment the old doorkeeper, known as Sam and the solitary inhabitant of the theater during off-hours, came waddling up to the manager with a card to say that Lady Miriam Marden wished to see him. He turned away, but Father Brown continued to blink steadily for a few seconds in the direction of the manager's wife and saw that her wan face wore a faint smile—not altogether a cheerful smile.

Father Brown moved off in company with the man who had brought him in, who happened, indeed, to be a friend

and person of a similar persuasion, which is not uncommon among actors. As he moved off, however, he heard Mrs. Mandeville give quiet directions to Mrs. Sands that she should take up the post of watcher beside the closed door; and he knew that one part of his suggestion was being very practically carried out. Mrs. Sands did not look as if the most energetic Italian lady could easily get past her.

"Mrs. Mandeville seems to be an intelligent woman," said the priest to his companion, "though she keeps so much in the background."

"She was once a highly intellectual woman," said Jarvis sadly," rather washed out and wasted, some would say, by marrying a bounder like Mandeville. She has the very highest ideals of the drama, you know; but of course it isn't often she can get her lord and master to look at anything in that light. Do you know, he actually wanted a woman like that to act as a pantomime boy? Admitted that she was a fine actress but said pantomimes paid better. That will give you about a measure of his psychological insight and sensibility. But she never complained—as she said to me once, 'Complaint always comes back in an echo from the ends of the world; but silence strengthens us.' If only she were married to somebody who understood her ideas, she might have been one of the great actresses of the age; indeed, the high-brow critics still think a lot of her. As it is, she is married to that . . ."

And he pointed to where the big black bulk of Mandeville stood with its back to them, talking to the ladies who had summoned him forth into the vestibule. Lady Miriam was a very long and languid and elegant lady, handsome in a recent fashion largely modeled on Egyptian mummies, her dark hair cut low and square like a sort of helmet, and her lips very painted and prominent and giving her a permanent expression of contempt. Her companion was a very vivacious lady with an ugly attractive face and hair powdered with gray. She was a Miss Theresa Talbot and she talked a great deal while her companion seemed too tired to talk at all. Only, just as the two men passed, Lady Miriam summoned up the energy to say:

"Plays are a bore, but I've never seen a rehearsal in ordinary clothes. Might be a bit funny. Somehow nowadays one can never find a thing one's never seen."

"Now, Mr. Mandeville," said Miss Talbot, tapping him on the arm with animated persistence. "You simply must let us see that rehearsal. We can't come to-night and we don't want to. We want to see all the funny people in the wrong clothes."

"Of course I can give you a box if you wish it," said Mandeville hastily; "perhaps your ladyship would come this way." And he led them off down another corridor.

"I wonder," said Jarvis in a meditative manner, "whether even Mandeville prefers *that* sort of woman."

"Well," asked his clerical companion, "have you any reason to suppose that Mandeville does prefer her?"

Jarvis looked at him steadily for an instant before answering.

"Mandeville is a mystery," he said gravely. "Oh, yes, I know that he looks about as commonplace a cad as ever walked down Piccadilly. But he really is a mystery, for all that. There's something on his conscience. There's a shadow in his life. And I doubt whether it has anything more to do with a few fashionable flirtations than it has with his poor neglected wife. If it has, there's something more in them than meets the eye. As a matter of fact, I happen to know rather more about it than anyone else does, merely by accident. But even I can't make anything of what I know except a mystery."

He looked around him in the vestibule to see that they were alone and then added, lowering his voice:

"I don't mind telling you because I know you are a tower of silence where

secrets are concerned. But I had a curious shock the other day, and it has been repeated several times since. You know that Mandeville always works in that little room at the end of the passage, just under the stage. Well, twice over I happened to pass by there when everyone thought he was alone, and what's more, when I myself happened to be able to account for all the women in the company, and all the women likely to have to do with him, being absent or at their usual posts."

"All the women?" remarked Father Brown, inquiringly.

"There was a woman with him," said Jarvis almost in a whisper. "There is some woman who is always visiting him; somebody that none of us knows. I don't even know how she comes there, since it isn't down the passage to the door; but I think I once saw a veiled or cloaked figure passing out into the twilight at the back of the theater, like a ghost. But she can't be a ghost. And I don't believe she's even an ordinary 'affair.' I don't think it's love-making. I think it's blackmail."

"What makes you think that?" asked the other.

"Because," said Jarvis, his face turning from grave to grim, "I once heard sounds like a quarrel, and then the strange woman said in a metallic menacing voice four words, 'I am your wife.'"

"You think he's a bigamist," said Father Brown reflectively. "Well, bigamy and blackmail often go together, of course. But she may be bluffing as well as blackmailing. She may be mad. These theatrical people often have monomaniacs running after them. You may be right, but I shouldn't jump to conclusions . . . and talking about theatrical people, isn't the rehearsal going to begin and aren't you a theatrical person?"

"I'm not on in this scene," said Jarvis with a smile. "They're only doing one act, you know, until your Italian friend comes to her senses."

"Talking about my Italian friend," observed the priest, "I should rather like to know whether she has come to her senses."

"We can go back and see if you like," said Jarvis; and they descended again to the basement and the long passage, at one end of which was Mandeville's study and at the other the closed door of Signora Maroni. The door seemed to be still closed, and Mrs. Sands sat grimly outside it as motionless as a wooden idol.

Near the other end of the passage they caught a glimpse of some of the other actors in the scene mounting the stairs to the stage just above. Vernon and old Randall went ahead, running rapidly up the stairs, but Mrs. Mandeville went more slowly, in her quietly dignified fashion, and Norman Knight seemed to linger a little to speak to her. A few words fell on the ears of the unintentional eavesdroppers as they passed.

"I tell you a woman visits him," Knight was saying violently.

"Hush," said the lady in her voice of silver that still had in it something of steel. "You must not talk like this. Remember he is my husband."

"I wish to God I could forget it," said Knight and rushed up the stairs to the stage. The lady followed him, still pale and calm, to take up her own position there.

"Somebody else knows it," said the priest quietly, "but I doubt whether it is any business of ours."

"Yes," muttered Jarvis, "it seems as if everybody knows it and nobody knows anything about it."

They proceeded along the passage to the other end where the rigid attendant sat outside the Italian's door.

"No, she ain't come out yet," said the woman in her sullen way, "and she ain't dead, for I heard her moving about now and then. I dunno what tricks she's up to."

"Do you happen to know, ma'am," said Father Brown with abrupt politeness, "where Mr. Mandeville is just now?"

"Yes," she replied promptly. "Saw

him go into his little room at the end of the passage a minute or two ago, just before the prompter called and the curtain went up. Must be there still, for I ain't seen him come out."

"There's no other door to his office, you mean," said Father Brown in an off-hand way. "Well, I suppose the rehearsal's going in full swing now, for all the Signora's sulking."

"Yes," said Jarvis, after a moment's silence, "I can just hear the voices on the stage from here. Old Randall has a splendid carrying voice."

They both remained for an instant in a listening attitude so that the booming voice of the actor on the stage could indeed be heard rolling faintly down the stairs and along the passage. Before they had spoken again or resumed their normal poise their ears were filled with another sound. It was a dull but heavy crash and it came from behind the closed door of Mundon Mandeville's private room.

Father Brown went racing along the passage like an arrow from the bow and was struggling with the doorhandle before Jarvis had wakened with a start and begun to follow him.

"The door is locked," said the priest, turning a face that was a little pale, "and I am all in favor of breaking down *this* door."

"Do you mean," asked Jarvis with a rather ghastly look, "that the unknown visitor has got in here again? Do you think it's . . . anything serious?" After a moment he added, "I may be able to push back the bolt; I know the fastenings on these doors."

He knelt down and pulled out a pocket knife with a long steel implement, manipulated it for a moment, and the door swung open on the manager's study. Almost the first thing they noticed was that there was no other door and even no window. A great electric lamp stood on the table. But it was not quite the first thing that they noticed, for even before that they had seen that Mandeville was lying flat on his face in the middle of the room and the blood was crawling out from under his fallen face like a pattern of scarlet snakes which glittered in that unnatural subterranean light.

They did not know how long they had been staring at each other when Jarvis said, like one letting loose something that he had held back with his breath:

"If the stranger got in somehow, she has gone somehow."

"Perhaps we think too much about the stranger," said Father Brown. "There are so many strange things in this strange theater that you rather tend to forget some of them."

"Why, which things do you mean?" asked his friend quickly.

"There are many," said the priest. "There is the other locked door, for instance."

"But the other door *is* locked," cried Jarvis staring.

"But you forgot it all the same," said Father Brown.

A few moments afterwards he said thoughtfully, "That Mrs. Sands is a grumpy and gloomy sort of card."

"Do you mean?" asked the other in a lowered voice, "that she's lying and the Italian did come out?"

"No," said the priest calmly. "I think I meant it more or less as a detached study of character."

"You can't mean," cried the actor, "that Mrs. Sands did it herself?"

"I didn't mean a study of *her* character," said Father Brown.

While they had been exchanging these abrupt reflections, Father Brown had knelt down by the body and ascertained that it was beyond any hope or question a dead body. Beside it, though not immediately visible from the doorway, was a dagger of the theatrical sort lying as if it had fallen from the wound or the hand of the assassin. According to Jarvis, who recognised the instrument, there was not very much too be learned from it, unless the experts could find some finger-prints. It was a property dagger; that is, it was nobody's prop-

erty. It had been kicking about the theater for a long time; and anybody might have picked it up. Then the priest rose and looked gravely round the room.

"We must send for the police," he said, "and for a doctor, though the doctor comes too late . . . looking at this room, by the way, I don't see how our Italian friend could manage it."

"The Italian!" cried his friend. "I should think not. I should have thought she had an alibi if anybody had—two separate rooms, both locked, at opposite ends of a long passage with a fixed witness watching it."

"No," said Father Brown, "not quite. The difficulty is how she could have got in this end. I think she might have got out the other end."

"And why?" asked the other.

"I told you," said Father Brown, "that it sounded as if she was breaking glass—mirrors or windows. Stupidly enough, I forgot something I knew quite well: that she is pretty superstitious. She wouldn't be likely to break a mirror, so I suspect she broke a window. It's true all this is under the ground floor, but it might be a skylight or a window opening on an area. But there don't seem to be any skylights or areas here." And he stared at the ceiling very intently for a considerable time.

Suddenly he came back to conscious life again with a start. "We must go upstairs and telephone and tell everybody. It is pretty painful. . . . My God, can you hear those actors still shouting and ranting upstairs? The play is still going on. I suppose that's what they mean by tragic irony."

When it was fated that the theater should be turned into a house of mourning an opportunity was given to the actors to show many of the real virtues of their type and trade. They did, as the phrase goes, behave like gentlemen, and not only like first walking gentlemen. They had not all of them liked or trusted Mandeville, but they knew exactly the right things to say about him; they showed not only sympathy but delicacy in their attitude to his widow. Indeed, she had become in a new and very different sense a tragedy queen, her lightest word was law, and while she moved about slowly and sadly, many ran hither and thither upon her errands.

"She was always a strong character," said old Randall rather huskily, "and had the best brains of any of us. Of course poor Mandeville was never on her level in education and so on, but she always did her duty splendidly. It was quite pathetic the way she would sometimes say she wished she had more intellectual life. But Mandeville—well, *nil nisi bonum* as they say." And the old gentleman went away wagging his head sadly.

"*Nil nisi bonum* indeed!" said Jarvis grimly. "I don't think Randall at any rate has heard of the story of the strange lady visitor. By the way, don't you think it probably *was* the strange woman?"

"It depends," said the priest, "whom you mean by the strange woman?"

"Oh! I don't mean the Italian woman," said Jarvis hastily, "though as a matter of fact you were quite right about her too. When they went in, the skylight was smashed and the room was empty, but so far as the police can discover, she simply went home in the most harmless fashion. No, I mean the woman who was heard threatening him at that secret meeting—the woman who said she was his wife. Do you think she really was his wife?"

"It is possible," said Father Brown staring blankly into the void, "that she really was his wife."

"That would give us the motive—of jealousy over his bigamous remarriage," reflected Jarvis, "for the body was not robbed in any way. No need to poke about for thieving servants or even impecunious actors. But as for that, of course you've noticed the outstanding and peculiar thing about the case?"

"I have noticed several peculiar

things," said Father Brown. "Which one do you mean?"

"I mean the corporate alibi," said Jarvis gravely. "It's not often that practically a whole company has a public alibi like that—an alibi on a lighted stage and all witnessing to one another. As it turns out, it is jolly lucky for our friends here that poor Mandeville did put those two silly society women in the box to watch the rehearsal. They can bear witness that the whole Act was performed without a hitch with the characters on the stage all the time. They began long before Mandeville was last seen going into his room. They went on at least five or ten minutes after you and I found his dead body. And, by a lucky coincidence, the moment we actually heard him fall was during the time when all the characters were on the stage together."

"Yes, that is certainly very important and simplifies everything," agreed Father Brown. "Let us count the people covered by the alibi. There was Randall; I rather fancy Randall practically hated the manager, though he is very properly covering his feelings just now. But he is ruled out; it was his voice we heard thundering over our heads from the stage. There is our *jeune premier*, Mr. Knight; I have rather good reason to suppose he was in love with Mandeville's wife and not concealing that sentiment so much as he might; but he is out of it, for he was on the stage at the same time being thundered at. There was that amiable Jew who calls himself Aubrey Vernon; he's out of it, and there's Mrs. Mandeville; she's out of it. Their corporate alibi, as you say, depends chiefly on Lady Miriam and her friend in the box; though there is the general common-sense corroboration that the Act had to be gone through and the routine of the theater seems to have suffered no interruption. The legal witnesses however are Lady Miriam and her friend Miss Talbot. I suppose you think *they* are all right?"

"Lady Miriam," said Jarvis in surprise. "Oh, yes . . . I suppose you mean that she looks a queer sort of vamp. But you've no notion what even the ladies of the best families are looking like nowadays. Besides, is there any particular reason for doubting their evidence?"

"Only that it brings us up against a blank wall," said Father Brown. "Don't you see that this collective alibi practically covers everybody? Those four were the only performers in the theater at the time, and there were scarcely any servants in the theater, none indeed except old Sam who guards the only regular entrance and the woman who guarded Miss Maroni's door. There is nobody else left available but you and I. We certainly might be accused of the crime, especially as we found the body. There seems nobody else who can be accused. You didn't happen to kill him when I wasn't looking, I suppose?"

Jarvis looked up with a slight start and stared a moment, then the broad grin returned to his swarthy face. He shook his head.

"You didn't do it," said Father Brown, "and we will assume for the moment, merely for the sake of argument, that I didn't do it. The people on the stage being out of it, it really leaves the Signora behind her locked door, the sentinel in front of her door, and old Sam. Or are you thinking of the two ladies in the box? Of course they might have slipped out of the box."

"No," said Jarvis, "I am thinking of the unknown woman who came from nowhere and told Mandeville she was his wife."

"Perhaps she was," said the priest, and this time there was a note in his steady voice that made his companion start to his feet once more and lean across the table.

"We said," he observed in a low eager voice, "that this first wife might have been jealous of the other wife."

"No," said Father Brown. "She might have been jealous of the Italian girl perhaps or of Lady Miriam Marden.

But she was not jealous of the other wife."

"And why not?"

"Because there was no other wife" said Father Brown. "So far from being a bigamist, Mr. Mandeville seems to me to have been a highly monogamous person. His wife was almost too much with him; so much with him that you all charitably suppose that she must be somebody else. But I don't see how she could have been with him when he was killed, for we agree that she was acting all the time in front of the footlights. Acting an important part too. . . ."

"Do you really mean?" cried Jarvis, "that the strange woman who haunted him like a ghost was only the Mrs. Mandeville we know?"

But he received no answer, for Father Brown was staring into vacancy with a blank expression almost like an idiot's. He always did look most idiotic at the instant when he was most intelligent. The next moment he scrambled to his feet, looking very harassed and distressed. "This is awful," he said, "I'm not sure it isn't the worst business I've ever had. But I've got to go through with it. Would you go and ask Mrs. Mandeville if I may speak to her in private?"

"Oh, certainly," said Jarvis as he turned towards the door, "but what's the matter with you?"

"Only being a born fool," said Father Brown, "a very common complaint in this vale of tears. I was fool enough to forget altogether that the play was 'The School for Scandal.'"

He walked restlessly up and down the room until Jarvis reappeared at the door with an altered and even alarmed face.

"I can't find her anywhere," he said. "Nobody seems to have seen her."

"They haven't seen Norman Knight either, have they?" asked Father Brown dryly. "Well, it saves me the most painful interview of my life. Saving the grace of God, I was very nearly frightened of that woman. But she was frightened of me too, frightened of something I'd seen or said. Knight was always begging her to bolt with him. Now she's done it, and I'm devilish sorry for him."

"For him?" inquired Jarvis.

"Well, it can't be very nice to elope with a murderess," said the other dispassionately. "But as a matter of fact, she was something very much worse than a murderess."

"And what is that?"

"An egoist," said Father Brown. "She was the sort of person who has looked in the mirror before looking out of the window, and it is the worst calamity of mortal life. The looking-glass was unlucky for her all right, but rather because it wasn't broken."

"I can't understand what all this means," said Jarvis. "Everybody regarded her as a person of the most exalted ideals, almost moving on a higher spiritual plane than the rest of us. . . ."

"She regarded herself in that light," said the other. "And she knew how to hypnotize everybody else into it. Perhaps I hadn't known her long enough to be wrong about her. But I knew the sort of person she was five minutes after I clapped eyes on her."

"Oh, come," cried Jarvis. "I'm sure her behavior about the Italian was beautiful."

"Her behavior was always beautiful," said the other. "I've heard from everybody here all about her refinements and subtleties and spiritual soarings above poor Mandeville's head. But all these spiritualities and subtleties seem to me to boil themselves down to the simple fact: that she certainly was a lady and he most certainly was not a gentleman. But, do you know, I have never felt quite sure that St. Peter will make that the only test at the gate of heaven."

"As for the rest," he went on with increasing animation, "I knew from the very first words she said that she was not really being fair to the poor Italian, with all her fine airs of frigid magna-

nimity. And again, I realized it when I knew that the play was 'The School for Scandal.'"

"You are going rather too fast for me," said Jarvis in some bewilderment. "What does it matter what play it was?"

"Well," said the priest, "she said she had given the girl the part of the beautiful heroine and had retired into the background herself with the older part of a matron. Now that might have applied to almost any play; but it falsifies the facts about this particular play. She can only have meant that she gave the other actress the part of Maria, which is hardly a part at all. And the part of the obscure and self-effacing married woman, if you please, must have been the part of Lady Teazle, which is the only part any actress wants to act. If the Italian was a first-rate actress who had been promised a first-rate part, there was really some excuse, or at least some cause, for her mad Italian rage. As a matter of fact, there generally is for mad Italian rages. Latins are logical and have a reason for going mad. But that one little thing let in daylight for me on the meaning of her magnanimity. And there was another thing even then. You laughed when I said that the sulky look of Mrs. Sands was a study in character, but not in the character of Mrs. Sands. But it was true. If you want to know what a lady is really like, don't look at her, for she may be too clever for you. Don't look at the men round her, for they may be too silly about her. But look at some other woman who is always near to her, and especially one who is under her. You will see in that mirror her real face; and the face mirrored in Mrs. Sands was very ugly.

"And as for all the other impressions, what were they? I heard a lot about the unworthiness of poor old Mandeville; but it was all about his being unworthy of her, and I am pretty certain it came indirectly from her. And even so it betrayed itself. Obviously, from what every man said, she had confided in every man about her infernal intellectual loneliness. You yourself said she never complained, and then quoted her about how her uncomplaining silence strengthened her soul. And that is just the note; that's the unmistakable style. People who complain are just jolly human Christian nuisances; I don't mind them. But people who complain that they never complain are the devil. They are really the devil; isn't that swagger of stoicism the whole point of the Byronic cult of Satan? I heard all this, but for the life of me I couldn't hear of anything tangible she had to complain of. Nobody pretended that her husband drank or beat her or left her without money or even was unfaithful, until that rumor about the secret meetings; which were simply her own melodramatic habit of pestering him with curtain-lectures in his own business office. And when one looked at the facts, apart from the atmospheric impression of martyrdom she contrived to spread, the facts were really quite the other way. Mandeville left off making money on pantomimes to please her; he started losing money on classical drama to please her. She arranged the scenery and furniture as she liked. She wanted Sheridan's play and she had it; she wanted the part of Lady Teazle and she had it; she wanted a rehearsal without costume at that particular hour and she had it. It may be worth remarking on the curious fact that she wanted that. But Mandeville was only blamed for being that sort of man. Nobody thought of blaming her for marrying that sort of man."

"But what is the use of all this tirade?" asked the actor, who had hardly ever before heard his clerical friend make so long a speech. "We seem to have got a long way from the murder in all this psychological business. She may have eloped with Knight, she may have bamboozled Randall, she may have bamboozled me; but she can't have murdered her husband, for everyone agrees she was on the stage through

the whole scene. She may be wicked but she isn't a witch."

"Well, I shouldn't be so sure," said Father Brown with a smile. "But she didn't need to use any witchcraft in this case. I know now that she did it, and very simply indeed."

"Why are you so sure of that?" asked Jarvis, looking at him in a puzzled way.

"Because the play was 'The School for Scandal,'" replied Father Brown. "And that particular Act of 'The School of Scandal.' I should like to remind you, as I said just now, that she always arranged the furniture as she liked. I should also like to remind you that this stage was built and used for pantomimes; it would naturally have trap-doors and trick exits of that sort. And when you say that witnesses could attest to having seen all the performers on the stage, I should like to remind you that in the principal scene of 'The School for Scandal' one of the principal performers remains for a considerable time on the stage but is *not* seen. She is technically 'on,' but she might practically be very much 'off.' That is the Screen of Lady Teazle and the Alibi of Mrs. Mandeville."

There was a silence and then the actor said, "You think she slipped through a trap-door behind a screen into the floor below, where the manager's room was?"

"She certainly slipped away in some fashion, and that is the most probable fashion," said the other. "I think it all the more probable because she took the opportunity of an undress rehearsal, and even indeed arranged for one. It is a guess; but I fancy if it had been a dress rehearsal it might have been more difficult to get through a trap-door in the hoops of the eighteenth century. There are many little difficulties, of course, but I think they could all be met in time and in turn."

"What I can't meet is the big difficulty," said Jarvis, putting his head on his hand with a sort of groan. "I simply can't bring myself to believe that a radiant and serene creature like that could so lose, so to speak, her bodily balance, to say nothing of her moral balance. Was any motive strong enough? Was she very much in love with Knight?"

"I hope so," replied his companion, "for really it would be the most human excuse. But I'm sorry to say that I have my doubts. She wanted to get rid of her husband, who was an old-fashioned provincial hack, not even making much money. She wanted to have a career as the brilliant wife of a brilliant and rapidly rising actor. But she didn't want in that sense to act in 'The School for Scandal.' She wouldn't have run away with a man except in the last resort. It wasn't human passion with her but a sort of hellish respectability. She was always dogging her husband in secret and badgering him to divorce himself or otherwise get out of the way; and as he refused he paid at last for his refusal. There's another thing you've got to remember. You talk about these highbrows having a higher art and a more philosophical drama. But remember what a lot of the philosophy is! Remember what sort of conduct those highbrows often present as the highest! All about the Will to Power and the Right to Live and the Right to Experience . . . damned nonsense and more than damned nonsense—nonsense that can damn."

Father Brown frowned, which he did very rarely; and there was still a cloud on his brow as he put on his hat and went out into the night.

"TWO A PENNY"

A NOTE ON SHOULDER STRAPS IN WAR TIME

BY MAJOR A. HAMILTON GIBBS, M. C.

"Who'll buy my nice fresh corpses, two a penny?"
—SIEGFRIED SASSOON—*The Effect*

THIS is an account of what happened to four batteries of field artillery in what history calls the Battle of Hangard Wood, but which will be remembered by survivors as the Battle of the Staff.

They were quite good batteries, some of whose officers and men sported a soiled ribbon or two dating back to 1914. They had been in the Cambrai fizzle; they had fought their way out with the remnants of the Fifth Army in what is called the Great Retreat; and they had been personally complimented by Haig on their fighting spirit—not, of course, that that means anything. Such polite moral uplift was part of Haig's job. But, on the whole, the legend on their cap badges became them well—that legend which reads "*Ubique quo fas et gloria ducunt.*"

It has not yet been entirely forgotten that on the 21st of March, 1918, the Germans, among other things, wiped out the British Fifth Army. In the early days of April the French and British line joined once more, miles farther back, at Hangard Wood, a few miles southeast of Amiens. It was then that over the signature of the British Commander in Chief a laconic Order of the Day informed every man that England had her back to the wall—as if they didn't know it—and that the enemy must only be allowed to pass over their dead bodies.

There were no trenches any more. The infantry were holding on in shell holes. Behind them the artillery stood nakedly in the open, field guns and sixty pounders all higgledy-piggledy, blurting shells desperately over each other's heads.

Man power was down to zero and those who were taking part in the picnic in Hangard Wood knew from Haig's lugubrious but well-meaning utterance that if the enemy got there—it was the end.

With this fact staring them in the face, it was no little consolation to the artillery to know that the Australians were lying out in front of them from Villers-Bretonneau, littered with corpses and champagne bottles, to Hangard Wood in whose shady depths they swapped jokes with the coal-black Senegalese, mutually appreciating each other's technic in this four-year-old revival of the high art of killing. Both, it seemed, had the advantage of the same natural aptitude to start with.

And so the field artillery thankfully went on firing till the guns were so hot that they burned the bare hands, in answer to the S.O.S. rockets which, almost every half hour, announced another desperate German attack all along the sector.

For a week it rained coldly. A dark mist, reeking of decomposition, hung over the soddened landscape. No gunner slept. Night and day were all one. The enormous piles of shell cases behind the guns told of their reply to the infantry's urgent demand for a barrage. Their eyes burned in the back of their

heads and they repeated the orders in a sort of sleepless stupor. Every few hours teams, skating and slithering through the oozy mud, brought them more ammunition. They ate their half-cooked food on the seats of the guns, soaked through and shivering. For days they had passed beyond cursing. They had become automata, a mere series of reflexes responding to echoes; and when on the eighth morning the enemy artillery "found" the battery of another unit a couple of hundred yards in front of them, they watched guns knocked out and men disappear, broken in small pieces, with a dull laugh as they went on slipping shells into the breach.

Day after day, in ones or twos, crudely bandaged Senegalese, whimpering like children now that they were wounded and out of the fight, filed between the batteries in an endless chain, inquiring in bastard French for the ambulance.

But for all their attacking the enemy did not break through.

And then the Staff entered the fight. Those eighteen pounders, they said, were firing at too long a range. "Can't have that, b'Gad! They must be pushed forward a bit, what?" . . . And so the Staff looked again at the maps of country they had never seen and found "just the place for 'em, b'Jove!" And, as an afterthought, "Better send a couple of battery commanders to reconnoiter and report."

The two battery commanders met and went forth in the rain. One was a "temporary gentleman," the other a "regular." Both had been majors commanding their batteries for over a year in the firing line all the time. If either of them ever had any illusions about "glory," and the "ennobling influence of war," his experience from section commander to battery commander had long since taught him that such things were, in the vernacular of the day, a washout. Both of them had long since learned that the only sensible thing in war was to get the cushiest possible job at the greatest possible distance from No Man's Land —but strangely enough neither had taken any steps to cash in on that painfully acquired knowledge.

The position indicated by the Staff was some three thousand yards nearer to the enemy. On the map it showed as a depression that ended in a steep ridge at right angles to the line of fire. For more than a mile the approach to it was in full view of any enemy observation balloon or airplane, and the road was lined with swollen dead horses whose legs jutted up like wooden pegs stuck into a row of plum puddings. The road and the plowed fields on either side of it were pockmarked with shell holes all the way along.

Without comment the two Majors blew tobacco smoke through their nostrils and increased their pace. Decomposing draught horses created a perfume only one degree less unpleasant than unburied gunners—or infantry for that matter. Little experience was necessary to interpret the meaning of that shell-swept road. They could visualize the salvos bursting in the middle of the teams every night when the rations and ammunition were being brought up; and they observed that there was no other way to get in or out.

"How very interesting!" said the temporary gentleman.

The regular shrugged his shoulders. "Bloody unhealthy, I call it!"

They went on down into the depression. It was that in more senses than one. Half-way in they came upon a battery. The gunners, for all the world like dead bodies, were stretched out by the gun-wheels, snatching an uneasy moment's sleep.

Their commander with cavernous eyes and a three-day beard tried to conceal the hope that blazed into his mind. "Have you . . . er . . . come to relieve us, by any chance?" he asked casually.

"I don't know," said the temporary gentleman. "We've got to reconnoiter this place and report on it."

The other laughed dryly. "Take my tip and keep out of it. It's the nearest thing to hell I've ever been in! As soon as I open fire they drop five-nines right on top of us. Look at the place!" He jerked his head at the guns, and the two remarked that each gun was perched up on a little hill, by contrast with the surrounding shell holes. The other went on, "I've been in here a week and I can just muster three men per gun. And half my drivers have been killed. See that lad in front?" He pointed to another battery a few hundred yards on the right front. "He's had three guns knocked out by direct hits. If they don't relieve him soon there won't be anybody to relieve. . . . Have a whisky?"

The temporary gentleman shook his head. "On our way back perhaps. We'd better strafe round a bit and get the hang of this place. Cheerio, for the time being!"

Out of hearing of that battery commander, the regular permitted himself a brief emotional expression. All he said was, "Jesus Edward Christ!" It is curious what precision war lends to one's choice of epithet.

The temporary gentleman apparently did not hear. He was gazing through an angle-of-sight instrument at the forward ridge. Then he made a little calculation on the back of his map. The result sent his eyebrows up. "Look here, old thing," he said, "if Fritz advances a hundred yards one can't drop the range to go on shooting him because of the crest. Just check that, will you?"

The regular did so. "H'm!" he said. "That means that the only place one can shoot from is along the line of where that rear battery is. God knows what use that forward fellow is!"

"Let's go and see," said the temporary gentleman.

They not only did so, but they explored every inch of the area recommended by the staff. From time to time they stopped and worked out more calculations. Every one added to the conviction that tactically, strategically, and ballistically that depression was the last place an experienced battery commander would choose to put his guns. Judged merely from the map, without having seen the actual place, it was the one spot that the enemy would naturally select to bombard because it seemed to offer positions for batteries.

"I suppose," said the regular, "that's why the Staff had us go and reconnoiter the place. Presumably there's a knowledgeable fellow back there somewhere who has got Haig's Order of the Day in his mind, and knows we can't afford to waste any more men."

The temporary gentleman laughed. Then he said, "Wait till you sign the report I'm going to write! It's going to damn this place so thoroughly that they'll be willing to let the Germans capture it! . . . Come on, let's go and imbibe some of that fellow's whisky."

By noon they were back with their batteries and by two o'clock a report, signed by them both and by the brigade commander also, condemning the suggested position for reasons that were numbered one to twelve, had been sent back to the Staff.

At four o'clock that same afternoon word came over the wire that the brigade would move up that night and take over the positions in the depression!

The forward position—where three of the guns had been knocked out by direct hits—was assigned to the temporary gentleman. The order reached him just as he finished writing a letter. For a moment he sat very still, without comment. Then he unfolded the letter and wrote, "P.S. The Staff has just picked out a new position for me, one of their very best. We shall be rather busy for a while, so if you don't hear from me for a day or two, don't worry, dearest."

Thus does the modern gladiator express his *Moriturus te salutat!*

II

They went in that night.

It was probably the rain which put a

damper on the Germans' activity. There was no attack. Three of the batteries took over their new positions in the usual way, all the guns being brought up together and manhandled on to their platforms with the usual accompaniment of sweat and oaths. The temporary gentleman was taking no chances however. The battery was brought up, one gun at a time. As soon as a gun was on its aiming posts and the ammunition up, the gunners were told off to dig a deep trench in rear of every gun and to sandbag the sides. They needed no explanation as to the reason why.

Dawn put their work to the test. A salvo crashed into the middle of the battery and was followed by a burst of ragged gunfire. The gunners tumbled into their trenches and lay flat. When the firing ceased, as cleanly as it had begun, for all the world like a sudden squall, the temporary gentleman made two silent observations: first that the batteries in rear had not been getting it, and secondly that the enemy had his range exactly.

It was the senior subaltern who summed it up. He grinned unshavenly at the Major across a steaming cup of tea. "If Fritz begins dropping big stuff—good-night! Five minutes would wipe out the whole bloody battery."

"I wish it would wipe out the whole bloody Staff," said the temporary gentleman. "Then we could get on with the war. . . . Look here, old thing, see that they get on with the digging as soon as they've finished breakfast. I'm going to strafe round a little with the Babe and see if murder can be prevented. . . . As soon as you're ready, Babe."

The junior subaltern was lighting a cigarette. He was called the Babe not only for his schoolgirl complexion, but because he was only just out of his teens. "I'm ready now, sir," he said.

"By the way, old thing," said the Major to the other one, "if it 'snows' badly while I'm away, clear the position. Take 'em forward and half left, under that ridge."

The senior subaltern followed his pointing finger, nodded, and watched the two of them stride off into the mud, each leaving a thin blue swirl of tobacco smoke. He finished drinking his mug of tea, lighted a cigarette, and walked over to the guns. The gunners were already silently digging again. And as he looked at the new shell holes around each gun emplacement his eyebrows went up, and a queer smile twisted his face.

"Jesus!" he muttered.

Not more than an hour and a half had elapsed and the sand bags behind each gun began to form a low protecting wall, when the subaltern saw the figure of a man coming down the ridge in front. He pulled out his glasses.

"The Major!" he said. "Cheers! He's found a position and left the Babe up there marking it out." He walked out to meet him. "Any luck, sir?"

The temporary gentleman looked at him for a moment without answering. Then he said, "They've got the Babe." He held out his hands. They were sticky with blood. "Just one shell," he said wearily, "a whizz bang. Burst right by us, we both walked on a couple of paces and the kid grinned and said 'They've got me, Major!' and he fell on his face, spouting blood. Before I could pick him up he was dead." He wiped the back of his hand across his mouth. "Come on, let's get on with it. There's no position anywhere forward. Tell Brown to bring me some water to wash with. . . . Everything all right here?"

The senior subaltern nodded. "Shall I take a couple of men and go and get the Babe, sir?"

"No," said the Major, "I got two infantry and a stretcher and they've taken him to a dressing station up on the ridge."

At that moment in the far distance they heard a violent popping as though a dozen champagne bottles had blown their corks out.

"That sounds like us!" said the Major and, as the two of them jumped into the square hole some three feet deep with

a canvas sheet over it that was their "mess," the scream and crash of the first shells were almost one sound.

"Big stuff this time!" said the subaltern.

The major watched it silently, ducking as bits of shell screamed over them. "Get Brigade!" he yelled to the signalers who were plastered flat in the next hole.

"Line!—gone, sir!" came the reply. "O. P. line too! Two men out on it!"

There was a deep furrow between the Major's eyebrows. He swung round on the subaltern. "Get 'em out by subsections. Tell 'em to follow you, half left and forward to the ridge. I'll wait till they're all away."

The senior subaltern watched for a moment to see if he could snatch the opportunity of a lull in the shelling. There was no lull. So presently he leaped out and dashed from gun to gun, yelling the orders.

Judging their time by some atavistic instinct, each detachment, waiting till the next one had got away, scrambled out from its trench and doubled after the senior subaltern to the left flank of the battery, where they flung themselves down in the comparative shelter of the ridge from which they could look back and watch the murk of smoke from the bursting shells as it blotted out the position.

When by some miracle they were all out without casualty, the Major gathered up his papers and instruments into a dispatch case, and doubled after them.

A breast of ground hid the other batteries from view, but in a few moments the soul-shattering crashes of "big stuff" that fell on their own gun position were punctuated by the staccato double-crack of the other three batteries in action—gun-fire.

"Jesus!" hissed the subaltern. "It's an S.O.S.!" and he looked up at the Major expectantly.

It is an unwritten law that all guns go on firing during an S.O.S. until the last gunner is dead.

Under the bank the men and the subaltern were lying flat on their stomachs huddled together. They seemed to be on the very edge of the barrage. Its fury began fifty yards away from them, and as though the Germans were enraged by the reply of the eighteen pounders, the volume of the bombardment redoubled. The tremor of the earth made itself felt through their bodies. Space—time were annihilated by the rush and crash of shells. The air reeked with the bitter smell of them, which was so strong they could taste it. The battery position could no longer be seen. It lay under a black shroud of rolling smoke, pierced by a multitude of momentary flashes.

"S.O.S! . . . S.O.S!" The call hammered itself in the Major's brain. It was his job to go and fight those guns of his. . . . He stood there, regardless of bits of steel that whizzed back like wasps of death. "S.O.S.!" It seemed as though all the centuries of tradition of the British Army were ordering him to take his men back and get into action. He saw himself courtmartialled and shot for cowardice in face of the enemy if he didn't. Suppose the enemy was breaking through at that very moment! . . . If he went back to the guns there wouldn't be a man alive in three minutes. The whole battery must be wiped out. If he stayed out until this hell was over he could move the guns back a few hundred yards and, even if they courtmartialled *him*, the battery could go on shooting for many a long day. . . . Tradition or common sense? . . . He was alone with his responsibility. . . . Suddenly he flung himself down and put his mouth to the subaltern's ear. "Look here," he said, "I'm going back to the next battery to report that I'm out of action. If I'm not back in an hour, wait till this stops and send out a couple of men to look for me."

"Christ, you're not going *now* Major?"

"Don't interrupt!" snapped the Major. "These are your orders. Stay here till I come back or till this stops. If some bloody Colonel or brass hat should

come and order you back into action with that stuff dropping, tell him you've got definite orders from me not to do so, see! It's too bloody unintelligent. . . . I'll be back in an hour! What's your time?"

They bent back the sleeves of their raincoats and checked watches.

Speechless, the subaltern saw the Major get up and start striding off into the barrage.

It was a little matter of just over a quarter of a mile to the next battery—a nice brisk walk on a calm spring morning. When the Major emerged from the barrage and walked into the "regular's" battery no comment was made. For one thing they were too busy. For another thing the only Death that was really interesting to a man in the line was his own. And so once more only the mildest and most momentary interest was displayed when they saw the Major start back into it again some twenty minutes later, taking with him one of their own subalterns to replace the deceased Babe. Nevertheless, it was that subaltern who involuntarily illustrated the whole psychology of it: having saluted with a cheery grin and the offer of a cigarette on the Major's arrival in the battery, he smiled grimly a few minutes later when the Major told him to "get ready to come along." The personal aspect of the Major's survival struck him for the first time, since it was now linked to the improbability of his own; an improbability that changed to icy blind terror as they went back down the valley which changed its contours as they walked, which opened up into holes beneath their feet—black smoky holes that reeked of cordite. The quarter of a mile was an eternity of more concentrated fear than the boy had ever known. As they came out of it at last, his eyes were dilated, his hands clammy, his face chalky-white. He fell, rather than dropped, beside the subaltern and the men in the shelter of the ridge.

When it finally slackened and stopped they went over to the battery. The muzzle of number one gun was smashed off, the wheel of number three was on fire; number six had three jagged holes through the shield. The others were undamaged, but the trenches in rear of them were blown in. A five-nine had converted the signalers' and the officers' holes into one loose slimy mess.

The senior subaltern gave a silent whistle. Then he laughed. "About the prettiest shooting I've seen!" he said.

"Yes, but damn it!" burst out the Major, "don't you realize that we're not supposed to be bloody spectators? Curse the fool who ordered us in here! . . . Get the guns ready to move—now!"

III

The new position was half-way up the rear slope of the depression—about fifty yards behind and a hundred to the flank of the "regular's" battery. Roughly speaking, all four batteries were now in echelon down the slope. The second phase of the battle of the Staff began in comparative calm. For a couple of days the enemy, with the customary singleness of idea, continued to plaster the evacuated forward position. About every hour he would drop a few thousand rounds on it. At night he made most excellent practice on the road in. The list of dead drivers began to be quite imposing. But on the third day the enemy lengthened his range and in great leaps the shell bursts began creeping up the slope. It was as though in a nightmare the hooked hands of some blind blood-lusting giant were groping nearer and nearer, feeling for one's throat. There was no moving possible, since there was no other place in the depression to move to, and they might not go outside it. Judging by results, one can only imagine that something like the following monologue ensues when the Divisional Brass Hat glances over the day's casualty returns: "Seven drivers . . . h'm! . . . Eight gunners . . . phew! . . . Four second lieutenants . . . oh well, rafts of 'em down at

the base! . . . Two battery commanders . . . dear, dear, that's too bad! . . . What's this? Three guns knocked out by direct hits. . . . Good God! That's terrible! Something had better be done immediately! Where *are* those batteries, Jones? Show me on the map . . . what d'you think? Hadn't we better move 'em?"

That, at least, was the fate of those batteries in the days which followed. Daily the ammunition wagons, having dumped their load, went away with the bodies of the dead lashed to the limbers, jolting woodenly as they lurched over shell holes. Daily the stretcher bearers picked their dubious way through the mud with their flinching burdens. And yet, for every S.O.S. rocket sent up by the infantry, the rest of them, pressed close to the flimsy gun shields, laid down a barrage.

One afternoon in the cold drizzle of dusk when the evening's shelling had fallen off to a few lazy rounds, the temporary gentleman was sitting under the flap of canvas, holding a mug of hot tea in his chilled hands. Brown, the servant, popped his head under and announced, "Rations up, sir!"

The Major, still nursing his tea, stepped carefully out. Blowings, the jingle of bits and the sucking and clumping noises of the feet of horses in the mud meant one supreme thing to those war-wracked beings. They meant letters, possibly parcels, from some thirty women in another world. Out of the dark came the Quarter-master sergeant and saluted. "Only one for you, sir!" he said. "I'll give the rest to the gunners when the wagons are empty."

From the feel of it the Major knew it was the one he wanted. He gave various orders with regard to the ammunition, and turned to go back under the flap, the letter throbbing in his hand, when he became aware of another figure standing there, his wagon line subaltern. "Oh, hullo there!" he said, "come in and have some tea while they're unloading . . . Brown! More tea!"

He led the way in and lighted the two candle ends that were stuck on the biscuit-box that was the table. An eager thumb pried under the flap of the letter. He glanced across at the subaltern. The boy stood there shaking, his teeth chattering. At the sight of his face the Major's thumb was stilled. He put the letter in his pocket. "Anything wrong?" he asked quietly.

The canvas flapped and Brown came in with a dixie of tea.

"Drink that first!" said the Major.

Obediently the boy gulped down a couple of mouthfuls. Then somehow he slapped the cup on the biscuit-box. "They've . . . they've been shelling us down there all day, Major," he said, "and I . . . I . . . it's no good. I've got to tell you. I can't stand it any more . . . God damn you, I tell you I can't stand it any more! D'you hear!" His voice went up almost in a scream. He put his fingers in his mouth and bit on them, staring at the Major, panting wildly. The Major stepped towards him and slid an arm round his shoulder. "It's all right, old thing!" he said quietly. "I know! I know!"

The boy's head dropped on the wet rough cloth of the Major's coat and he sobbed chokingly, clinging like a child.

The Major's grip tightened. "It's all right!" he said, "it's all right!"

Outside were voices, rough jokes, the clang of shells being piled behind the guns, the occasional crash of a tired long-range five-nine, and through it all the gentle patter of the rain on the canvas. Whether one were dead or merely shell-shocked, things just went on.

Presently the Major sat the boy down on a box and with oddly hesitant hands lighted a cigarette, blowing the smoke out of his lungs fiercely.

"Now listen," he said quietly. "You'd better get out of this bloody push. You can't go home because all leave's stopped. But when you get back to the wagon line make out an application for transfer to the anti-aircraft. That's the cushiest job in the line, so cushy that in

a month you'll be spolling to come back again! Only take my tip and don't come! I'll see that the transfer goes through at once. . . . Now lap down that tea and then don't wait for the wagons. The Q. M. S. can look after them. . . . You'll be all right!"

The boy's hands dropped away from his face. "Oh, Major, I . . . you . . ." His attempt at thanks never reached their mark.

The Major had stepped outside. For a moment he stood there in the rainy darkness not seeing the blurred activities of shell carrying and unloading, nor yet the flickering in the sky that was not lightning. "If only I could transfer myself," he muttered, shivering.

A moment later the Quarter-master sergeant came squelching up. "Wagons all unloaded sir!" he reported.

The Major nodded. "Good. . . . Take them down, will you, Quarter? Mr. Jones is—not very well. I told him not to wait."

"He's a bit young for this game, sir," said the non-com. "By the way, sir, it's going round that we're to be relieved. Have you heard anything?"

"*Relieved?*" The word came from the Major almost like an oath. "Hell!" he said. "Latrine gossip, man! That's all. But you might just drop a hint among the men before you go down. They need a good laugh!"

As it turned out, within twenty-four hours they were to have that good laugh, —those of them that were left. For at dawn the next morning the enemy came leaping out of their shell holes, the signal apparently being the opening of their barrage. Down forward in the opposing holes the Senegalese spat on the handles of their stabbing knives with strange throaty cries of sensual ecstasy. The Anzacs tucked their cigarettes behind their ears, and got down to business. And back at the batteries occurred something in the nature of a shambles—the same old shambles that always happens when they've got your range and you've got to sit there and take it.

They took it for hours, each one of which was a longer eternity for the living than for the dead.

And then, in the early afternoon, when reports came back from the infantry that the attack had been repulsed and their own counter attack entirely successful, and the fury of the guns died down to occasional mutterings—then the Staff sprang their little joke.

Orders came through from the Brigade Commander to have the teams in readiness to move.

"Where to?"

"Don't know! The details haven't been received yet."

And so for an hour, in a sort of numbed quiescence they cleaned up their dead and evacuated their wounded and ordered their teams under cover.

At last the Brigade called up again and each battery was given a map reference. The move would take place immediately.

As the temporary gentleman received his map reference he blinked. It seemed to him to stir some chord of memory of a distant past. Then he reached for his map. One glance was enough. The position was already marked with a pinhole. It was the old spot from which the range had been deemed too long, the spot from which the Staff had ordered them forward into the depression, the spot in which without casualty they had kept the enemy from breaking through.

Gun by gun the remnants dragged themselves out and slithered back through the mud to begin again in that old position—with this difference, however, that where four batteries went forward, only three came back. Of all that were left of them they could only muster enough guns and horses, officers and men to make three batteries.

The remainder had become aware of the eternal truth of that motto on their cap badges, the motto of the Royal Regiment: *Ubique quo fas et gloria ducunt*—which, being translated, means, as every gunner knows, "whithersoever the Staff and the enemy get you."

ETERNAL LIFE IN THE JUNGLE

BY JOHN W. VANDERCOOK

THERE is no winter in the jungle. The trees are never barren. The world's green never fades into the harsh chiaroscuro of brown and white which frost brings to the North. Nature is eternal. The forests that cover Suriname with the blanket of their mystery have never paused since the first morning scattered the barren mists. . . . Though the verdure is constantly dying to make room for new, all decay is immediately covered over by new growth. That is the spectacle. Every hour gives vivid proof of all other hours' eternity.

The Bushnegroes of Suriname are a far-scattered race of jungle blacks who for a century have lived in independence back in the unknown woods. They are the descendants of slaves who escaped from bondage on the plantations. But here in the new world they have forgotten slavery, forgotten the old tears, and now remember only the greatness, the mystery, and the peace of ancient Africa. In the eternal forest they, too, enjoy a perpetual summer of the soul. They never die.

They have a word for the body. It is Kra—a syllable that antedates Egypt by a thousand years. They have a word for the soul. This, too, is Kra. The shadow behind a black warrior when he stands with the sloping sun in his face is Kra. The mysterious part of one that adventures abroad in dreams is likewise Kra. Each thing is a different manifestation of the one truth—life. Body, soul, shadow, and dreams—all are true, inseparable, everlasting realities.

The Bushnegroes recognize no difference between these things. The men of the jungle see themselves as part of the vast scheme of immortality as manifest in the equatorial woods. The notion has a logical basis in every-day observation. The great bullet tree that towered above the rest in the woods there just beyond the clearing had not varied in appearance during the memory of three generations of men. But at last a time came when its hulk was eaten away by the white termites that had made their cancerous nests along the branches. The tree form was no longer a fitting dwelling for the great spirit of the tree. So the heavy trunk gradually crumpled into a black moist powder that returned to the earth and became part of the earth.

With the final decay the black shadow that was wont to creep across the clearing each sunlit afternoon faded away and in the end was gone. But soon a new bullet tree stood in the same place, cast a groping shadow as before. The ancestor tree had sown itself and now new trees have grown. The old spirit inhabits the new and worthier dwelling. There has been mutation but there has been no change.

It is the way of the forest that has produced the Bushnegro way of thought. They see the interdependence of the varied expressions of life but they do not trouble to differentiate. All is Kra.

When a Bushnegro child is born the umbilical cord is cut off and placed in a little box that has been made for the purpose by the father. The box is diminutive in size, but weeks of the most careful work have been devoted to its construction. Some beautiful, close-

grained wood is selected, cut, carved, joined, and polished. At last a cabinet is produced that for perfection of workmanship and symmetry of line equals any jewel box ever made by the most expert Florentine workman. With appropriate ceremony attended by the parents of the new-born and the headman of the village, the box with the umbilical cord inclosed is buried in the ground exactly beneath the place where the woman lay when she gave the child out of her body. The act forges the link between the newborn and the earth. The buried box marks the place in the forest where the child-spirit—the eternal Kra of the hitherto unknown being—became one with the body-Kra born of woman. The umbilical cord has bound the babe to the body of the mother. It is buried in the earth to tie the body-soul to the body of earth that is the eternal mother.

This is not merely symbolism. It is a true thing, a material manifestation of a material conception of immortality. Judged by white men's standards, it is not a "spiritual" attitude at all. Kra is body—the thing. So, too, is Kra the spirit, a thing. Our spirituality is the philosophy of what is guessed—it is our conception of the unknown. With the Bushnegroes all philosophy is a part of what is known—the way of mind that has grown through the ages out of what is seen and felt and heard.

With birth the body-Kra and the spirit-Kra become a single, human entity. But eventually a time comes when the body is old and, like the bullet tree beyond the village, it ceases to be a fit place for the residence of the soul's undiminished strength. So the Bushnegro, as we say, dies.

The family make another little box, even finer, more delicately carved and brightly polished than the first. Then they cut a lock of hair from above the forehead of the corpse and clip the nails of the right hand and the toe-nails of the left foot and put the relics in the box and bury them in the place where the babe's umbilical cord was hidden at birth—no matter how far that bit of land may be from the spot where death at last occurred.

Each relic has significance. The head is where the Kra-spirit dwells. In the head all thoughts, desires, and regrets transpire. The head is the apex of the triangle of life. So a lock of hair goes into the funeral box. The right hand is the hand that has met and conquered the travails of life. It has guided the dugout canoe in the rapids, drawn back the arrow and let it fly from the hunting bow. The right hand caresses in love. It is the hand of friendship, the strong hand, the part of the body that is second only to the head in service. So part of the right hand—the nails—must be included.

The nails of the left foot are cherished because the left foot is the foot that takes the first step forward. It has gone first upon all journeys and into every adventure. Men lost in the woods are said to wander in a leftward curve because of the natural tendency to stride more vigorously with the foot that is on the side of the heart. Sleepwalkers always step out first with the left foot. It is third in use and virtue of the vital parts of the body.

When the three symbols have been returned to the earth the circle of immortality is joined. The immortal Kra-spirit is released forever from the worn-out place where it has spent the years of human mingling. When the three major expressions of the living body go back to the earth from which they first emerged the body-Kra disappears from physical sight forever. Nor will the spirit of the dead man return as another personality. One thing can't be another thing.

But the individual whose body dies remains in the village as himself. Nothing has changed. He eats invisible food, has the emotions and favoritisms of carnate men. He enters into conversation freely with anyone and gives and receives advice and blame.

The dead make the same mistakes that men do, except that the tendency to err has been minimized by long experience. The status of the dead in the community in no wise differs from the status of the living. Residence is limited by one thing only—memory. The *yorka*—the ancestor spirits—go away—they cease to exist—when, and only when they are forgotten. Immortality is founded, in actual practice, upon the sound basis of distinguished accomplishment.

II

Beikaaka's great-grandmother was a silly old lady who always burnt her cassava cakes. Her descendants were kind to her while she lived in human form, but when she died there was no need for her in the jungle village that was her home. To be quite frank, it was just as well for her body-Kra and spirit-Kra to sever company. The event placed all responsibility for food and shelter upon great-grandmother herself for the first time in many moons—a good thing for the old lady. She was no use to her family while she lived. No one thought of asking her advice during life, so no one cares to chat with her now she is a *yorka* spirit. Death brought no change. She is utterly forgotten—she has ceased to exist. Her spirit no longer dwells among us.

But *Beikaaka's* great-grandmother's father was a *granman* of the village. He was famous over all the jungle territory for his strength, his force of mind, his tact and cleverness in dealing with the gods. The whole town depended upon him for advice and assistance in every important undertaking. His spirit, in fact, was so powerful that his body died when he was a comparatively young man. Though it was more vigorous and upright than most men's, it was nevertheless inadequate for his transcendent soul. But he did not leave his people. He is as definitely alive to the townspeople to-day as he was to his contemporaries those many years ago when he walked the paths. His descendants talk to him, ask and receive his advice at every crisis. He was great, so he is fresh in the recollections of living men. He is *still* immortal.

This belief—that persistence is founded on good works—does not coincide with the theoretic Bushnegro philosophy, but it exists, none the less. The Bushnegroes do not differ greatly from their brothers of all colors and all countries.

There is sorrow, however, when a Bushnegro dies. The relatives of the dead cannot help but mourn a little—even though they feel he is near them still. His smile has gone.

There is a ceremony of parting. Beside the rivers of Suriname one may find, growing close down the bank, half in the water and half out, a curious, oily-textured, pungent-sweet smelling flower which the Bushnegroes call the *sangra-foa*. It is a remote species of marshmallow, I believe. When a wife or husband dies the mate cruises in a *corial* until a *sangra-foa* is found. There are two colors, orange and white. Both are adequate for ceremonial purposes, but the orange variety is preferred because it is rarer and more beautiful. The *sangra-foa*, still cool from the water of the river, is closed in the right hand of the dead. When the time comes for the body to be disposed of, the mate of the dead breaks the fading bloom of the *sangra-foa* from the stalk in the corpse's hand. . . . The parting is complete.

The Bushnegroes have no thought of a future meeting beyond the grave—as a distinct and faraway occurrence. That belief is founded on the Christian premise that a definite separation and change of residence comes with death—a view which they do not share.

One custom, however, does coincide with Christian usage. They do, unreasonably, attach special importance to the physical form of the dead. Christians avidly rear up monumental tombs—though Christian teaching is emphatic in insisting upon the utter negligibility of a soul-empty carcass.

The Bushnegro carry the inconsistency still farther. Their attachment to the physical form of the dead leads them to postpone final burial sometimes for an inconceivably long time.

After the hair and nails have been properly confined to the earth in the funeral box, corpses are set up in a central place in the town upon a high scaffold open to the sky. Beside this the family and friends of the dead congregate and ask many questions about things they have forgotten to discuss with the departed until this late hour. The talk also touches upon problems about which they believe the release of the spirit from its body will have given wisdom. *The dead man answers.*

This conviction of actual converse between the dead and living is one of the strangest things with which one comes in contact in the Suriname bush. It is a long, uphill mental exercise for a white man—I know it was for me—to dissipate the idea that the talk between the carnate and the shades bears no resemblance whatever to our sort of spirit communion. Trances, red lights, slates, tea-tables, and ectoplasmic cameras enter into the performance not at all. It is not mental—it is *literal.* The phantasmal dialogues of the Bushnegroes take place at any hour of the day or night. No preparation or special knack is required for communion. It is, above all, a commonplace. It is, literally, a true, actual experience of every Bushnegro man, woman, and child.

They insist so emphatically that they can hear the answers of the dead, that it is, from a strictly legal standpoint, impossible to deny the verity of the statement.

In our country we believe a man is telling the truth if he can bring forward half-a-dozen reputable people who will testify they agree with him. In Suriname there are twenty thousand witnesses who will swear upon their life that they *do actually, physically hear the discourse of dead lips.* Yet we whites complacently make an exception to our own law of evidence in this extra-curricula case and sniff intolerantly.

There is no doubt whatever to my mind that the Bushnegroes do talk to their dead and hear them reply. The colloquy is utterly free from flim-flammery or ritual. To them, at least, it is as real as the river.

A man arguing hotly with a friend upon some petty point will turn suddenly to the air at his side and ask, "Is that so, my mother?"—though she died ten years ago. He receives confirmation or denial of the point and the argument goes on. His friend has also heard—perhaps enters into heated debate with the shadows by his side.

The words of the dead are not always accepted at face value. Often, even during the period of formal questioning which takes place when the lately extinct corpse rests upon its sun-scorched, fetid scaffold in mid-clearing, the living differ violently with an answer and say so. Heated arguments ensue until a common ground of opinion is arrived at.

Sometimes, in the case of eminent men whose advice is in especial demand, the corpse is left on its platform for a month or more, but ordinary folk are done with in two or three days and the body is taken into the jungle and left where its decay will cause no annoyance.

Rot occurs quickly in the tropic forest. Ants and wild beasts and grubs and snakes all help the work along. There is no need to bury a corpse underground. The wood-creatures will reach it no matter how deep it is hidden, so why trouble? After the hours of questioning are done, reverence for a corpse no longer exists.

The "postholders," or ambassadors whom the Dutch Government still sends into the bush in accordance with the terms of the old treaties which gave the Bushnegroes their independence, try to see to it that the final disposition of bodies is not delayed past a limit of three days. A *granman* who does not enforce this rule in his town is punished. His stick of office is taken away and an-

other headman is appointed. The government can do this by the simple expedient of "closing the river" for six months or a year.

III

In the central place of every jungle town is a little hut. From the roof-peak projects a tall pole, topped by a small board platform. This is the ancestor-house. The high platform is the place where gifts are offered by grateful relatives for the pleasure of the kindly *yorka*—the ancestor spirits which inhabit the house.

Nearby are several tall, roughly cut sticks driven at an angle into the ground. From the tip of each pole hangs a weather-worn strip of cloth. The sticks are tributes raised in appreciation of a *yorka's* favor—some advice which has proven good. Neither sticks nor rags have the slightest use or value, either in dead or living eyes. But it was trouble to put them there. The well-intentioned meaning of the thing is plain, and the *yorka* are glad for the thought and effort which they prove.

The *yorka* hut is, however, primarily the place where individuals, and sometimes the whole community *en masse* congregate for special converse with the dead. It is not just a terminus for gifts.

Suppliants speak aloud, without display or secrecy. If a friend passes by he pays no attention. There is nothing novel or self-conscious about the colloquy.

Sometimes the questioner brings a gift of cassava or rum or calico to offer as a present to the old friend he wishes to consult. But more commonly donations are postponed until event proves that the *yorka's* advice was good. Ancestors are expected to earn all they get.

It must not be thought that these presents are in the nature of sacrifices. Emphatically they are not.

The Bushnegroes do not worship their ancestor spirits. The whole mood of worship is utterly foreign to them. Worship has no place in any aspect of their thought, least of all does it enter into their relations with the dead.

I know that many travelers write of ancestor-worship in Africa, but I am quite sure they are mistaken. The Bushnegroes may differ vastly from others of their race in various parts of the world, but they are Negroes, after all—and must therefore be fairly representative. I doubt if worship of the dead has a place in the thoughts of any Negro in what is called the "primitive" state—for the simple reason that worship of any kind is impossible for a jungle black. It is not possible to worship a spirit unless there is first the belief that spirits take on a higher, differing, supernatural form. And they do not. Bushnegro dead do not dress in white gauze like comic-opera phantoms. Nor do they glide mysteriously, appear and disappear. In short, they are not "ghosts."

The good dead make easy transit of the vast highways of the skies. They can reach to the top of the ancestor-house for their gifts and mingle with the thunder. But still they are sensed as beings with arms and legs and head and loin-cloths like the old men of the town who sit and talk before the headman's house. The bad dead are less free. The bad are earth-bound. They cannot reach the lofty gifts that are offered to the kind. They follow only paths cut for the use of the living and venture in the moonlight on the rivers only in phantom *corials* hewed from the stuff of air for their evil journeyings. They are trapped forever in realities. The good *yorka* hold them in easy subjugation.

An *asung-pau*—a barrier against bad phantoms—hangs across the mouth of every Bushnegro path in the interior of Suriname. The utility of the thing is important, its form simple. An *asung-pau* is nothing but a long palm branch with hanging leaves supported across the way by two long forked sticks stuck in the ground at either extremity. To go up the path toward the village that hides up the rise of land, one must walk

through and under the *asung-pau*, letting its rattling fronds brush against the face. A stranger who attempts to make his way around the end of the barrier is loudly called back and made to walk straight through, legitimately. The theory, based on actual experience, is that no one who comes to the town on an unholy mission will venture boldly through the *asung-pau*. Fear of the avenging fetish that protects the path will prevent. The same rule that applies to the living affects the dead. Good spirits can march through the palm-barrier. Bad phantoms cannot.

The Bushnegroes believe that the physical strength of the evil dead is so inferior to the vigor of the good that the branch which deters the one will present no obstacle to the other. . . . Thus is the *asung-pau* doubly effective.

Physical strength, wisdom, and goodness are synonymous terms which express the same quality—the Bushnegroes think. Weakness, stupidity, and evil are equally correlative. Wisdom is strength of mind that shows itself in carrying life to a successful and, therefore, a "good" conclusion. Stupidity is a sign of weak inadequacy that fails in every encounter and is therefore "bad." Bushnegro morality is a positive virtue. Sin is negative.

As a result of their beliefs the jungle people fear neither living nor dead. Evil is its own punishment, here and hereafter. Bad folk are paltry, pitiable, frail, inferior—butts for contempt eternally. The good, in death as in life, are proud, resourceful, able, and admirable. Wisdom keeps the belly full, the heart glad, the lips relaxed for eternal laughter. Virtue, truly, is its own reward. The concept is rare, proud, magnificently just. Forgiveness—written into a theology—seems sickening, weak-brained stuff to the Bushnegroes. Man knows what he's about. He may choose his own way. No paths are blind. Let no one who goes against the ancient forest laws come whimpering for mercy.

Some Bushnegroes believe that the spirits of the very good, who are so notably superior to the living that it irks them to remain after death in the unworthy village, depart into the distant places of the sky to dwell in a sort of eternal quiet palaver with the farther gods. But the belief is not commonly shared. It seems to be an isolated instance of one idea which is tracable back to the slave times when the Negroes heard tales of the white God and his golden Son who hide away from black men's sorrows in the sky. It is too impersonal, too snobbish a belief to have been born out of the jungle Negro's mind.

There is infinite difference of opinion between individual Bushnegroes concerning details of belief. Each personal philosophy is limited by the temperament and imagination of the person. Some say the *yorka* continue eternally. Some cannot conceive so abstract a belief and shake their heads. But no one is so unskilled in experience of mind as to consent to parrot the opinion of one wiser than himself. If *Gadu-Horri* doesn't go quite so far as his uncle in things spiritual—that's his business and not his uncle's business. One will not argue nor the other listen. The autonomy of small minds is tolerantly granted.

IV

In the civilized world, or rather, in those regions that fancy they hold all copyright privileges on civilization, there is a universal tendency to think of races who live in jungles as people ringed around with terrors. This is not true of the Bushnegroes. They have few fears. They are not ghost-ridden, and they have learned how to conquer the night-moods. Survival in the tropical forests would be impossible were this not so. The failure of foreign races in equatorial regions has not always been through want of food, or guns, or quinine. Many more have died because they were afraid.

The forest is truly terrifying to an outlander. My wife and I spent our first night in the jungle just twenty-four

hours after we landed in Suriname. It was our first experience in the tropics.

In company with our guide and interpreter, we arrived at Kabel Station, the terminus of the government railroad, late on a sun-drowsed afternoon. We invaded a shabby frame hut where a railway foreman lives and made ourselves comfortable. Kabel Station is an empty, sandy clearing of about two acres in extent, walled around three sides by jungle. The Suriname river murmurs past. The scene was as calm as an English lane in summer twilight. Then the sun went down, as suddenly as if it had been doused in a pit.

From the dreary little screened porch where we sat and opened tin cans for supper we watched some Bushnegroes pass by in the thickening shadows on their way home to a nearby village. They were naked except for loin-cloths of vivid calico. The men carried gleaming axes and across their backs were slung their polished rifles. They walked with a silent tread that made them seem like unreal things, unguessed, unfathomable human mysteries of the weird land. Then utter darkness fell.

The wall of trees about the house seemed to take a gigantic stride forward out of the dark from every side until we were hemmed in, locked around and above and beneath in the unbreakable grip of unknown things. The shrieking voice of the tree-frogs, the cicadas, the countless noisy insects of the woods greeted the signal of night with a roar of sound, so weirdly pitched that it seemed to come from somewhere just beyond the range of human hearing. It is like the partial overflow of a voice immeasurably vast.

In an hour we had heard three other sounds. A jaguar roared somewhere beyond. A troupe of red baboons howled a fierce and maniacal tune. From the Bushnegro town nearby came very faintly the booming of a black man's drum signaling our coming.

Vague echoes lapped against the sky like a voice heard from another world, remote, unutterably far away—a place of different dreams.

The physical aspect of the great forest has but little to do with the state of mind which impresses the outlander. There is a mystic something there too, a heavy incubus of curious moods that lies upon the soul of the intruder and can never be thrust off.

This undefinable fear, I think, explains to a large extent why most colonization experiments near the equator have failed. The forest enmity has made us furiously, impotently angry, and anger has found vent in the passionate cruelties that have sullied the banner of empire in all far domains.

If the Bushnegroes, or, for that matter any other tribe of "primitives" shared this fear it is inconceivable that they would have continued upon earth.

Hourly conflict with nature in the tropics for the barest needs of subsistence is heroic. It must be. The Bushnegroes are forced to feel the consciousness of conflict, the sense of man pitted against nature in an endless struggle for the things of nature that man appropriates to his own needs in order to live. But they believe that they are equipped with skill of mind and hand which make them a fair match for all the things that be. So they are not afraid. Above all else, they are rid of the fear of death. They never die.

The day is a strenuous time. The rapids are fierce, the cassava does not grow, and there is the prospect of coming months of famine. . . . But each night the sudden twilight falls. The moon comes up. The mood of life changes—for them. All conflicts are forgotten. This is the time for the drums. The desires and regrets of the day depart on the tides of tomtom rhythm which flow down the long corridors of memory.

Sleep comes as a new adventure into an old eternity.

The Lion's Mouth

WANTED: AN INCOME TAXIMETER

BY FREDERICK L. ALLEN

I SEE that Mr. Mellon and his friends in Washington are engaged in their annual sport of lowering the income taxes. This is all right so far as it goes; but if they want to make a real hit with a suffering public, why don't they invent an income-tax blank that can be filled out without the aid of slide-rule, a dictionary, and a staff of learned statisticians? I have just been taking the examination in higher mathematics known as Form 1040, and I speak from a full heart and an aching mind. The moment I saw the paper I knew I was going to flunk.

The beginning of it was comparatively easy, but I didn't let that fool me. In my college days I knew too many fellows who would come out of the examination room groaning that the first question was such a snap that they spent an hour and a half writing on it, and didn't even get to question 7b. So after printing my name and address in beautiful big letters, I started in concisely:

1. Are you a citizen or resident of the United States?

Answer: Both.

2. Is this a joint return of husband and wife?

Answer: I'm doing all the work myself, if that's what you mean.

3. Were you married and living with husband or wife on the last day of your taxable year?

Answer: Yes and no; wife, not husband.

I got this far and stopped. That last question kept running in my mind. *Were you married and living with husband or wife on the last day of your taxable year?* It had a sort of lyrical quality, although the scansion was not quite perfect. It faintly suggested the work of Alfred, Lord Tennyson on an off day. Would I be given extra credit if I caught the spirit of the thing and answered in verse? Perhaps the examiner expected something like this:

Was I married and living with husband or wife
On the last long day of my taxable year?
On the last long day when the old year tarried
I was living with someone to whom I was married.

or possibly even this:

You must wake and call me early, call me early, Mellon dear,
To-morrow'll be the happiest time of all the taxable year,
Of all the taxable year, Mellon, the last and merriest day;
I'll be married and living with my wife, and it will certainly pay.

But with the next question came disillusionment. No longer did the bard of the Treasury strum his lyre. He descended from Parnassus to the somber levels of prose and asked, *How many dependent persons (other than husband or wife) under 18 years of age or incapable of self-support because mentally or physically defective were receiving their chief support from you on the last day of your taxable year?*

That fatal day again! Little, thought I, do we realize till long afterwards which are the really significant days. I looked at the instructions. Four hundred dollars apiece for dependents on that day, and I had let the chance slip! Next year I should be prepared. I took my engagement pad, turned to the page for December 30, 1926, and wrote firmly:

"To-morrow is the last day of my taxable year. Have guest room ready for mental and physical defectives."

It was while I was looking at the instructions that I began to realize why so many of our young men are unwilling to get married nowadays. Getting married (or, as the unromantic Mr. Mellon would put it, having a change of status) involves too much mathematics.

"Listen," I cried to my wife, who was reading in the next room, "aren't you glad our status didn't change during the year? I'll bet you can't understand this." And I read from the instructions:

"In case the status of a taxpayer changes during the taxable year, the personal exemption shall be the sum of an amount which bears the same ratio to $1000 as the number of months during which the taxpayer was single bears to 12 months, plus an amount which bears the same ratio to $2500 as the number of months during which the taxpayer was a married person living with husband or wife or was head of a family bears to 12 months."

"What are you reading?" said my wife sleepily. "A bear story? I thought you were figuring out your income tax."

"So I am," said I.

"All I could hear," said she, "was something about bears—single bears and family bears. Didn't you say family bears to 12 months?"

I looked at the instructions again. "Yes, but—"

"Well," said the voice from the next room, "what do they think we're running—a zoo? Tell them we have no bears; tell them all our bears are more than 12 months old; tell them—Look here, do we get credit for bears or do we have to pay for them? It might come in handy to know in case we're offered one some time. 'A delightful pet,' we could say to our visitors, 'and we get a reduction on our income tax for him. In confidence I may add that he's a family bear, with defective dependents.'"

I gave her up as hopeless and turned swiftly to the section marked INCOME.

For some minutes I worked busily, and the figures flew. I consulted Schedule A, I consulted Instruction 18, I stated nature of income, I explained in Table on page 2. I was away down in Item 3a, trying to decide whether I had claimed exemption during the year, and if so, from what, when my wife wandered in and looked over my shoulder.

"Are you going to claim obsolescence?" said she.

"Why?" I asked.

She pointed to the instructions, and I read, "Enter on line 15 the amount claimed as depreciation by reason of exhaustion, wear and tear, obsolescence or depletion."

"I was thinking of your hat," she went on amiably. "You know—the gray one. That sentence sounds to me like a direct invitation to make a claim on that hat. Only if you do it, you seem to be letting yourself in for a good deal. The very next sentence says, 'If obsolescence is claimed, explain why useful life is less than actual life.' That would seem to call for a short metaphysical essay."

I looked long and hard at the instructions. *Useful life is less than actual life.* "I don't know just what that means," said I, "but I don't like it. It has a cynical sound. Do you think it proper for the Government to circulate a document like this, which may fall into the hands of the young? Think of the young men—minors having a net income of $1000 or $2500, according to the marital status, or a gross income of $5000—who may read this and go about saying hopelessly to one another, 'It's true, it's true, as we feared. There is

no Santa Claus, and useful life is less than actual life.' Here is the Collector of Internal Revenue, who only a little while ago was writing poems about living with husband or wife, practically admitting that the whole thing is a miserable farce. 'Why go on with it any longer?' he seems to imply. 'Why not become a decedent, and let your executors or administrators make returns for you on Form 1040 or 1040A?'"

"Something ought to be done about it," agreed my wife. "You might write to Mr. Mellon. But meanwhile don't forget your hat."

It was days and days later in the taxable year when I finished my ordeal of additions, explanations, deductions, and computations and, sitting in the midst of a perfect snowdrift of scratch-paper, feebly set down the last item of all—BALANCE OF TAX. It wasn't very big, that last item; the newspapers will not itch to publish it; but by the time I reached it the words in the tax-return which had come to have the most vivid meaning to me were exhaustion and depletion. Oh, Mr. Mellon, why must you make things so complicated for us? Why don't you just ask us how much money we have made during the year and tell us what to divide it by, and ask us whether we had rather pay in advance or have it put on next month's bill?

THE STRUGGLE FOR BATHROOM SUPREMACY

BY MORRIS BISHOP

BILLY BURTON and Will Westover bought adjoining lots in the new Ferny Dell Communities Development. Each planned a house to cost about twenty thousand dollars.

The Burtons had the Westovers in to dinner, to talk over building plans.

"I'm going to have three bathrooms in my house," said Will Westover. "Three bathrooms, each with an adjoining bedroom."

Billy Burton flushed. He had planned only two bathrooms and three bedrooms. He countered, "Each of my bathrooms will be equipped with shower, tub, inset electric heaters, soiled-clothes-chute, running ice water, magnifying shaving-mirrors and cigar-lighter."

A sudden spasm of alarm shot though Will Westover, but he rallied against the onslaught. "Above my bathtubs I am going to have a set of wheels, buttons, and indicators like the instrument room of a battleship. A thermometric gauge will regulate the water to any desired temperature, Fahrenheit or Centigrade. There will be separate inlets for liquid soap, salt water, bath salts, and goldfish. Anyone taking a bath will have to study a special book of instructions. The bathtub will require as skillful handling as a steam-shovel."

The party broke up early; Billy Burton immediately got at his plans and converted one bedroom into a bathroom; Will Westover appropriated another thousand dollars to bathroom fittings, cutting down expenses by doing the rest of his house in the Japanese style, which dispenses with all furniture except a bamboo tea table a foot high.

Billy Burton announced that he was going to install steam and electric-light baths, hot- and cold-air blasts, and electric vibrators; he was going to have the bathrooms completely surrounded with plate-glass mirrors like a Greek candy store. Will Westover came back with the announcement that his bathrooms would be decorated with period fittings; one would be Pompeian, one Italian Renaissance, one early Chinese; the porcelain ware in the last one would be genuine Ming.

Billy Burton had his plans redrawn to allow for a circular pool in the center of the great bathroom, with pond-lilies and

an ornamental fountain, to consist of a naked four-year-old boy holding in his arms a dolphin upside down, a thin stream of water to gush forth from the dolphin's mouth.

Will Westover then installed radio outfits in his bathrooms and added a kitchenette with special equipment for sea-foods.

Naturally all these developments cost money; Will and Billy were gradually obliged to cut down the rest of their houses; at last nothing remained but the series of bathrooms, with the necessary power rooms, furnace rooms, and pumping stations. But by this time they had in the bathrooms everything necessary to their existence.

Ferny Dell Communities, long known as the City of Beautiful Bathrooms, is immensely proud of the achievements of Will and Billy. People come from far and near to inspect these lovely bathrooms, Dream-Bathrooms, they are called, and to watch with awe those two implacable enemies, Billy Burton and Will Westover, defiantly taking baths at each other.

AT THAT, MAYBE THEY ARE

OR

LITTLE JOURNEYS TO THE HOMES OF FAMOUS LOVERS SEVERAL YEARS AFTER THE TRUSTING READER HAS LEFT THEM LIVING HAPPILY EVER AFTER

BY KATHARINE DAYTON

I. *CINDERELLA AND HER PRINCE*

Scene: A small salon in the palace, in which Cinderella and her Ladies in waiting are having tea. As the curtain rises the Newest Lady in waiting is helping Cinderella to a particularly deadly-looking pastry from a silver tray.

CINDERELLA [*naturally not as young as when we saw her last and, owing undoubtedly to living so happily ever after, not nearly so slender, everything about her having the air of being just a bit too tight, particularly in the armholes. The famous feet—no longer than we remember them, but considerably broader, with a decided tendency to puff and bulge through the interstices of the multi-strapped and perforated contraptions in which they are shod—are crossed conspicuously on a small red velvet-and-gold footstool before her. And—yes, she has no ankles to-day*]. —That one with the whipped cream, if you please, my dear. I know I shouldn't but I simply can't resist—um-m-m-m! Mocha filling! And would you believe it, my dear Countess, before I was married I weighed only ninety-six pounds and wore a two-and-a-half shoe? [*The Newest Lady in waiting, who is very young and very pretty, says nothing, there being obviously nothing but the wrong thing to say. Cinderella continues fatuously.*] The Prince, you know, really fell in love with my little feet. Have I ever shown you the glass slipper? I was the only girl in the country who could wear it, but, as I said, until I was married I wore only a two-and-a-half shoe, and when he saw me—oh, here he is now! [*The Prince has entered. His hair is rather thinner and his neck rather thicker than formerly, and one feels certain that he touches the floor with his finger-tips twenty times morning and evening from a sense of panic rather than pleasure. In a word, he is at that time of life which everyone who has reached it tries valiantly to persuade himself and everybody else is the prime of life—and he looks it. He has involuntarily brightened at sight of the Newest Lady in waiting, and instinctively pulled down his waistcoat and straightened his tie as he crosses the room. But at the words "two-and-a-half shoe" a shadow of resignation falls across his face.*]

CINDERELLA.—Come here, darling—I was just telling the Countess how perfectly silly you were about my feet! [*She looks happily at the footstool, and the*

Prince and the Newest Lady in waiting look unhappily almost anywhere else.] Just hand me the glass slipper, will you, dear? It's in that little ivory box on the table there. [*The Prince obeys mechanically, as if he had gone through these same motions several thousand times. As a matter of fact, he has.*] You see, Countess, as perhaps I've told you, I lost this at the ball the third night—but I'm forgetting you've never heard our romantic story, have you, my dear? I'd better begin at the beginning. [*Which she does, with the thoroughness and attention to detail characteristic of a feminine recital of an early love-affair. The older Ladies in waiting occupy themselves with their embroidery. The Newest Lady in waiting divides her gaze between Cinderella's second chin, and the puffy little feet on the footstool. The Prince does nothing and does it very badly. At length Cinderella concludes*]. And so we lived happily ever after—didn't we, darling? Hand the slipper to the Countess, dearest, and she'll put it back. [*Again the Prince obeys mechanically. As he is about to hand the glass slipper to the Newest Lady in waiting their eyes meet. Suddenly there is a muffled report like the shattering of an electric-light bulb. The Prince has let the glass slipper fall—accidentally—on to the polished floor. It flies into a billion infinitesimal splinters. The ensuing scene is horrible. At last Cinderella and the Newest Lady in waiting are both borne from the room in hysterics, and the Prince is left alone. He gazes dazedly at the shining wreck. Suddenly his expression changes. His face brightens. Involuntarily he straightens his tie and pulls down his vest. As he picks his way carefully to the door through the shimmering splinters there is a spring in his walk that almost convinces one he* has *reached the prime of life.*]

Curtain

II. *THE SLEEPING BEAUTY AND HER PRINCE*

Scene: A boudoir. As the curtain rises the Princess—she that was the Sleeping Beauty—is seated, cold-creaming her face before the mirror of her dressing-table, which is littered with the paraphernalia essential to this rite. She has retained her youthful freshness of face and figure to an astonishing degree, and manages with apparent ease the difficult feat of appearing charming even in the extraordinarily trying feminine cold-cream costume, with her hair screwed into a knot on top of her head. She is so engrossed in patting a fragrant skin-food into an incipient wrinkle between her eyebrows that she does not hear or see the Prince enter. He shows his age—not so much in his figure, for he is the lean, spare type, but in the lines around his mouth and the tired look in his eyes. He watches her preparations in dismay.]

THE PRINCE.—Not again!

THE PRINCESS (looking around at him. Her eyes are very bright, in sharp contrast to his dull and strained expression). —Not again what?

PRINCE.—Not going out again!

PRINCESS.—Why not? What on earth should we do if we didn't?

PRINCE (throwing himself exhausted into a deep-winged chair).—Well, we *could* stay home for once, I should think. I thought you said we needn't go anywhere to-night. I thought you said—

PRINCESS.—Well, what if I did? That was this morning. The Duchess de Montmorency only called up about an hour ago. It seems somebody died or something, and a dinner was cancelled, so there she was with nothing to do but stay at home, so she thought if she could get a few of the crowd together we'd all dine somewhere, and then go on to the theater, and then to that new place for supper, and we could dance there afterwards or go on somewhere else, and then we could go—[*She pauses a moment to throw back her head, slowly opening and shutting her mouth to exercise the muscles of her pretty white throat.*]

PRINCE (sarcastically).—Not home, surely?

PRINCESS (carefully wiping off the cream).

—Oh, no. I suggested trying that new roadhouse out on the Boulevard, where they have that marvellous jazz person —[*the Prince groans.*] Now, why do you have to go and be so horrid about it every time I want to have a little fun? [*She goes on with her work and presses a lump of ice to each cheek, but she is becoming rapidly angry.*]

PRINCE (too tired to care).—Yes, but can't we stay home *one* night? I'd like to stay home *one* night in our own Palace! I'm tired enough to drop. I can't stand it, I tell you—I simply can't stand it. And I don't see how you can much longer!

PRINCESS (turning suddenly to face him, slapping her cheeks briskly with the tips of her fingers. They are very pink from her massage, and her eyes are very bright with defiance, and she looks very pretty and the picture of health).—That's just where you're mistaken. I expect to stand it a whole lot longer, and you would, too, if a nasty old fairy had put you to sleep for a hundred years just when you were eighteen and beginning to have some fun! I wasted the best hundred years of my life sleeping—sleeping—sleeping—and I don't intend to waste any more that way if I can help it. You'd like me to sit so still cobwebs would form over me again, wouldn't you? And yet you were the very one who promised to make it all up to me—all the parties and dancing and everything I'd missed—and said we'd live h-h-happily ever after! If this is the way you feel about it I wish you'd n-n-never w-waked me up at all—I w-w-wish you'd never k-k-kissed me—I wish—[*she is sobbing violently*].

PRINCE (miserably and despairingly).—Now, don't do that, Beauty.

PRINCESS (with a fresh outburst).—And d-d-on't call me B-Beauty! What g-g-good does it do to be a b-beauty and feel on the t-top of the wave and have to s-s-stick in this old Palace day in and day out?

PRINCE (desperately, takes her in his arms).—I don't want you to stick in the Palace, darling. I want you to go out. I know you had a rotten time of it when you were a girl, but I just meant I'd like to stay home once in a while—have a quiet evening with just ourselves. But of course I'll go to-night. I—I'd like to!

PRINCESS (radiant through her tears).—That's my sweet old thing! And we *will* have a quiet evening sometime soon. Let me see—I couldn't do it to-morrow because I promised the Chancellor's wife we'd dine there, and the next night is the State ball, and the next is that charity costume thing, and the next night—[*She is so intent ticking off their prospective engagements on her fingers that she doesn't notice that the Prince's arms have dropped listlessly to his sides, or that he suddenly looks quite drawn and gray.*] Well, I can't say just when until I look at my engagement pad, but the season ought to slow up in six weeks or so. Hurry, darling—you'd better dress or we'll be late. [*She turns again to her mirror and begins applying a vanishing cream over the smooth flush on her cheeks. The Prince turns wearily, to leave the room. At the threshold he stops suddenly and turns back.*]

PRINCE (an odd expression on his face).—Oh, by the way, dear—what ever became of that fairy—you know, the mean one?

PRINCESS (rather indistinctly, as she is rouging her lips).—Um-m-m-? Oh, that one? Why, I don't know—she's around somewhere. She's in the telephone book, I guess. Why?

PRINCE (with a somewhat forced note of casualness).—Oh—nothing. I just wondered. [*He stands irresolutely a moment. The Princess is occupied to the exclusion of everything else in applying an even layer of power to her face, neck, and shoulders, an operation which demands undivided attention and some time. With a sudden determination the Prince very quietly traverses the few steps to the ornate little telephone table. He picks up the telephone book. He exits.*]

Curtain.

Editor's Easy Chair

REOPENING UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

BY EDWARD S. MARTIN

IN THE annual report issued last fall by the President of Columbia University, a document of extraordinary interest and value, there occurs this passage:

> As the years pass and the time comes when our older scholars of distinction and large achievement apply to be relieved of farther active service, they are uniformly asked where the University is to look for the best and most competent scholars for appointment to succeed those who are laying aside their burdens. With discouraging frequency the reply is made that there are no outstanding names which deserve special consideration, but that a choice must be made from a larger or a smaller group of mediocrities When the question is pressed as to why such a condition exists, particularly in fields of knowledge that are eagerly pursued and that have large present public interest and importance, the answer is that while there are many narrow men of competence within the limitations of their interest, there are few broad men able to grasp and to interpret a given field of knowledge, as well as to advance its boundaries by independent study and reflection.

To very much the same purport is a bit of testimony derived from quite a different source, to wit: from a medium sitting in company, and communicating, or purporting to do so, the sentiments of invisibles to their friends still in this life. Attached to the name of a man well known in the great work of constructing northwestern railroads of the United States, and addressed to another man well known to him in life and in the same employment, came this:

> Does it ever occur to you that when our generation passes, something distinctly real in American life will be lost? There are no such minds at work now as Hill or Kitson, Moffatt, and the rest, that came up in our neck of the woods; no one to take their place. Instead of a few real people, a great mass is coming along and where is it all going to end? That is what we (the invisibles) are thinking about. That is what we are wondering. Even to-day the laws are being flouted as never before. This either means that the laws are bad, or that there is too little resistance and stamina to enforce laws. Certainly something is wrong.

We have then the impression of the veterans of teaching and of the veterans of certain lines of material development, that their sort has done its work and has gone, or is going, for good, and that more of their kind are not to be expected, and they wonder how the world is going to get along without it; and neither living survivors nor communicating shades seem very hopeful about mankind confronting successfully so grave a failure of what seems to them necessary energy and guidance.

All that is just another indication of the ending of a period of time and the beginning of a new one. The management of the world is not going to be such as it has been. Roosevelt and Wilson have passed on, and Coolidge is President. The managers in the new period are apparently to be men of another sort

than the men of the old, and with other talents directed to other aims.

Of course, that is always happening but nowadays in an unusual degree. When one wants to know who is going to run the world that is making, he turns, of course, to youth, and never was youth more confident that it can do it than it is to-day. Never was it cockier, never more irreverent to the conclusions of its elders on all subjects, never more undaunted, more inquisitive, or bolder in inquiry and suggestion. Just at this writing a convention of college students gathered from all over the country has been meeting in Chicago to consider whether the church is up to its present job. The inquiry is timely enough, but think of its being undertaken by a lot of college boys!

THIS transference of the concerns of this life and this world to people of another sort from those who have managed it up to now means that the job itself has changed; that some things important to life are accomplished; that another set of things is to be undertaken. When Doctor Butler talks about "mediocrities," when the admonitory shade speaks of "a great mass" coming along it cannot really mean degeneration of mind or spirit. It must mean rather the development of a new generation for a new kind of work, a work of limitation and adjustment, a work probably of more precision than the job of "Hill, Kitson, Moffatt," and the rest, a great work of providing that an immense number of people shall live together in the use and enjoyment of an enormous collection of material provisions, shall share somehow in the production and enjoyment of enormous wealth, shall give and take without destructive fighting, shall have all the freedom that is consistent with order, and more and more of it as the provision of order is more wisely and intelligently conducted. The past management of the world, and especially the American world, has been largely pioneering. It has called for courage, energy, boldness of conception, and a driving power of construction that at times have been ruthless. The age that is now come calls for more scruples, more skill, nicer calculation and, besides all that, it seems evident that there is coming to it the exploration of extraordinary fields of new knowledge. There is more for our new leaders and managers than a nicer adjustment of what past leaders have accomplished. They are going to have a field of their own, and it may be by their achievement in that field that their qualities and powers will mainly be rated, though the job of adjustment seems for the moment quite enough to engage them.

The world is greatly oversupplied with roughneck legislation. The Treaty of Versailles made a great contribution to it; American prohibition did the like. Laws and their administration in these States are under constant discussion and are all but universally censured. Europe, trying to adjust its bellyful from Versailles, is doing a kind of egg dance, trying to manage its necessary activities without smashing anything. Authority of every kind has declined. The respect paid to money has been waning for twenty-five years. The men who can get it are no longer looked upon as wise because of their demonstrated capacity to become rich. Creeds in the last generation found it hard to share the world of belief with science; but nowadays science is at least as much questioned as creeds have been. Hardly any of its conclusions nowadays are accepted as final. Nothing in science seems proof against the possibility that something discovered to-morrow may contradict it. Even the scientific method is assailed as not of universal application. As to that Doctor Butler said in his report above quoted: "The essential fact in all scientific study is the use and the comprehension of the scientific method. Nothing is to be taken for granted and no test, whether quantitative or qualitative, is to be overlooked. Every conclusion as it is reached is held subject to the re-

sults of verification, modification, or overthrow by later inquiry or by discovery of new methods and processes of research." Furthermore he said, "One would suppose that after a half-century of this experience and this discipline, the popular mind would bear some traces of the influence of scientific method, and that it would be guided by that method, at least in part, in reaching results and in formulating policies in social and political life." For himself, however, he could find no evidence of such an effect. Passion, prejudice, and unreason, he says, sway men just as if the scientific method had never been heard of and, in searching for a reason for this, he concludes that science has not been and is not being well taught and, since that belongs to his employment as college president, he goes on to discuss it.

It may be permitted to wonder whether as yet the scientific method can cover religion. The great beliefs which have moved the minds of men and affected their action have come by faith, by belief not based on scientific proof but somehow attained without it. If we look forward to a world governed by what we are used to call knowledge, we must despair because of the great disparity between the size of the job and the means of passing around knowledge enough to handle it. That is why most of the thoughtful people, when they think about human life on this earth and its complicated prospects, say that the only thing that can pull us through is religion. If we have enough religion we can manage with a moderate amount of knowledge. Knowledge means experts. We do not have to have so very many of them. We do have to have the will to use them, and that will religion may supply.

THE man who knows is helpless without a power somewhere which permits his knowledge to be used. Regard the coal situation which, at this writing, shows no prospect of solution. But it could be solved; anyone would admit that. It would not be difficult to supply the necessary knowledge and sympathy and integrity to reach a solution fair for the time being to miners, operators, and consumers, and to embody in that solution a provision for self-correction as conditions change. That could be done if the minds of the parties most concerned could meet. Very likely that will be the solution, but at this writing no one can say when. It is the same way with the world generally. Life can be planned so as to move along prosperously if only the people concerned can be induced to agree to the plan.

Someone said the other day that all the frontiers in Europe were unjust; that is to say, unjust to some people. It seems obviously true that the frontiers in Europe have got to diminish in economic significance before the enjoyment of life in Europe can be what it is physically possible to make it. That continent, as we see it, and as more and more Europeans see it, ought to be some kind of a United States. This may be coming, and this mass of young experts that is going to manage the world may somehow get it done.

The great value of the young is that they have less to unlearn than the older people. Where there is to be a large conveyance of respected properties to the junk pile, it is the young who are suitable to be called to the work. The fathers of our Republic were most of them pretty young, Hamilton particularly; though Hamilton, it is true, was by no means a radical, but a convinced conservative, who believed in government by aristocracy, distrusted and despised control by popular majorities, and only accepted the Constitution because some sort of machinery of administration was indispensable and the Constitution was the best that offered. Hamilton was not disposed to throw on the junk pile anything he could keep. He was at heart a monarchist, but with him it was a case of any port in a storm and, so feeling, he was a wonderful pilot to democracy. But Napoleon, who

junked so much of Europe a century ago, was also young. The junking of our world has been pretty well accomplished by the war, but whereas the older generation may know something about putting it together as it was, the younger generation may prove to be more efficient in putting it together as it ought to be. Few people want it as it was. Even people who lost by the change want something better than that if they can get it.

THE processes of change are most interesting to watch. For example, the foreign debts that are owed to us. What is really going on about those debts is a gradual readjustment of the American mind. Little by little, we are thinking of them differently. One day we read that France is immensely prosperous and can pay everything it owes us, and the next day we read that it is a superhuman job to keep the franc from going to grass; that the best people in France are taxed to destitution; that her budget does not balance and that she cannot make it balance. We get a like order of stories about England: that England is going down hill; has lost half her trade; is choked up with unemployed, and ought not to be paying us anything. The last may be true—true for the time being anyway. The rest of it describes, no doubt, a temporary condition which will presently be better. But nothing that has been done about those debts is more than provisional. It is like the discoveries and conclusions of science, useful to-day, to-morrow, and probably the rest of the week, but likely any moment to be superseded by new knowledge. Our world is run on working hypotheses —that is the best we can do and that is all which has been done about the foreign debts.

That, however, has been very useful, and really we have done much better by Europe than we get credit for either from Europe or from many of ourselves. Anyone who wants to think so may be assisted to that opinion by the address of Secretary Kellogg before the Council on Foreign Relations on December 14th in New York, while the present attitude of the Administration was doubtless imparted by Secretary Mellon, when, on January 4th, in arguing before the Ways and Means Committee of the House for acceptance of the agreement negotiated with Italy, he said:—"*The entire foreign debt is not worth as much to the American people in dollars and cents as a prosperous Europe as customer.*" That is the pith of the situation about those debts. Those words of Scripture, "Let the dead bury their dead," have application sometimes to money matters. The first thought of the living must be, not for yesterday, but for to-morrow.

The problem of the foreign debts seems to be on the way toward solution, and the spirit and the pact of Locarno have encouraged every one about Europe, and the coal strike will probably be settled before these lines are read, and the hands of the younger generation are reaching for the steering wheel of the car humanity now rides in; and the feet of men still young will presently step on the gas. Timorous passengers are welcome to alight if they prefer and can find a suitable getting-off place not in the earthquake belt and not liable to floods. But it is much more interesting to stay in the car and see where it gets to.

There are those whose chosen field is that of knowledge who expect great things from the new drivers. Professor Bovie of Harvard was quoted as saying in a Lowell Institute lecture early in January that man "is just now undergoing an evolutionary change at a more rapid rate than has ever been experienced before. Surely formed in God's image, he shares in the bringing into existence of a new kind of individual, and we may expect achievements from the social organism beyond the power of the imagination to conceive."

That is the sort of talk the really hopeful observers give us. Let us stay on with them at least until it becomes less awkward to get out.

Personal and Otherwise

SOME twelve years ago Graham Wallas, the veteran British political scientist, astonished the bigwigs by dedicating *The Great Society* to a young American who had just produced his first book, *A Preface to Politics*, at the age of twenty-three. The young American was ***Walter Lippmann***. Mr. Lippmann followed *A Preface to Politics* with other books, of which the most recent are *Public Opinion* and *The Phantom Public;* he was for several years an editor of the *New Republic;* he is now in charge of the vigorous editorial page of the New York *World*. His record makes it plain that his discussion of the wisdom of majority rule is based on sustained and sympathetic study of democratic doctrine.

The special interest of ***Doctor Harry Emerson Fosdick's*** statement of "The Dangers of Modernism" is somewhat similar to that of Mr. Lippmann's article. Doctor Fosdick is himself so thoroughly a modernist that his criticism of those in his own camp carries added weight. His department is now a regular feature of HARPER'S MAGAZINE; next month he will write on Our Desire for Immortality.

Wilbur Daniel Steele's recent stories ("The Man Who Saw Through Heaven," "Blue Murder," and "Brother's Keeper") have been enthusiastically praised by so many discriminating readers that it is a particular pleasure, in presenting "The Gray Goose," to announce that other stories by Mr. Steele will follow it in the near future. He recently left his home at South Norwalk, Connecticut, for a voyage to Europe.

Nephew of the former Lord Chancellor, ***J. B. S. Haldane*** is a distinguished British biologist; until recently he was reader in biological chemistry at the University of Cambridge. He is the author of *Daedalus* and *Callinicus*, two volumes in the Dutton "To-Day and To-Morrow Series."

Another discussion like that which raged over "Living on the Ragged Edge" would seem to be impending. This month ***Emily Newell Blair,*** vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee and author of our recent article entitled "Are Women a Failure in Politics?" advances her arguments in the question of boarding school for boys and girls *versus* "home influence." Those who wish to defend the negative are asked to be brief; the space in the Personal and Otherwise department is limited.

To return a moment to political theory: we all agree that absolute freedom in a complex society is impossible. For example, we should suspect the sanity of a man who attempted to drive up Fifth Avenue when the traffic signals were set against him and claimed that this action was undertaken in defense of human liberty. But where shall the line be drawn? For many reasons it is a question of special interest to Americans in 1926. ***Bertrand Russell*** turns from such scientific labors as the writing of *The A B C of Relativity* to answer it for us.

As the second and concluding installment of ***Christopher Morley's*** fantastic comedy, "The Arrow," goes to press, his *Thunder on the Left* is repeating in book form the success it won serially in the Magazine. More than fifty-three thousand copies were sold in the first six weeks: a remarkable record for a story of such subtle workmanship. Mr. Morley returned from Europe last fall, began "The Arrow" while *Thunder on the Left* was appearing in HARPER'S, and finished it shortly after Christmas.

Ernest Boyd, Irishman by birth, New Yorker by present preference, translator of Guy de Maupassant, lively literary critic, and author of a recent series of HARPER articles entitled "A New Way with Old Masterpieces," was provoked by "Living on the Ragged Edge" (in our December issue)

to his present observations on the American habit of looking for happiness in boxes.

Another familiar HARPER contributor who has not appeared in our pages for several months returns in the person of ***William McFee,*** former sea-going engineer and author of *Casuals of the Sea*, *Command*, and other books. Three chapters of Mr. McFee's latest volume, *Sunlight in New Granada*, appeared in the Magazine last spring and summer. Although he now lives in Westport, Connecticut, his comment on "The Cheer Leader in Literature," like Mr. Boyd's article, represents to some extent a foreign point of view: Mr. McFee was born and educated in England.

The second short story of the month is the work of ***Fleta Campbell Springer,*** whose last HARPER story, "Legend," won first prize in one of the competitions of our 1924 Short Story Contest. Mrs. Springer, after a prolonged visit to Italy, is now living in New York.

In the days when ***Robert Benchley*** was president of the Harvard *Lampoon*, his classmates discovered in him an after-dinner speaker with an extraordinary gift for burlesque. Nobody who heard him impersonate a Congressman speaking of the bill that lay closest to his heart, or a headmaster describing the influence of his little school among the hills, can ever forget the hilarious experience. Mr. Benchley came to New York, became in due time dramatic critic of *Life*, and finally, two years ago, was persuaded to appear nightly in the "Music Box Revue" and present a burlesque treasurer's report in his old *Lampoon* style. What he learned, during that experience, of the relation between audience and performer he sets down in "Out Front." He has written three riotous books, of which the latest is *Pluck and Luck*.

Arnold J. Toynbee is a professor at London University and a recognized authority on European and Near-Eastern affairs. He recently visited this country to lecture at the Lowell Institute in Boston; and at our request, made at that time, now contributes a valuable study of the relations between England and America with reference to the general international situation.

Another Father Brown detective story by the redoubtable ***G. K. Chesterton*** concludes the fiction of this issue.

A. Hamilton Gibbs, brother of Sir Philip Gibbs and of Cosmo Hamilton, achieved an unusual success last summer with his fine novel, *Soundings*. He enlisted and served at the front through the entire duration of the war, finally becoming a major of artillery; and now he tells the plain story of what happened during those days as the result of a piece of military stupidity for which parallels might, we dare say, be found in the experience of other armies.

The final article of the month is by ***John W. Vandercook,*** a young American journalist who recently spent several months in the jungles of Suriname on the north coast of South America, a region occupied by Bush-negroes and seldom penetrated by whites. His article is one of a series of which the first was "White Magic and Black in the Jungle" (in the October issue), and the second, "Jungle Survival" (in January). These articles are taken from a book shortly to be published by Harper & Brothers entitled *Tom-Tom*. Mr. Vandercook has sailed for Liberia, where he will continue his study of the Negro race.

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Everybody knows *When We Were Very Young*, and most HARPER readers have seen "The Dover Road" or "Mr. Pim Passes By"; it is unnecessary to say more of ***A. A. Milne,*** whose new series of Christopher Robin poems we are now publishing month by month. The other poets are ***Elizabeth Morrow,*** the wife of Dwight Morrow, the New York banker; ***Ruth Fitch Bartlett*** (Mrs. Walter S. Bartlett), whose sonnet, "Bluebeard," appeared in our January issue; and ***Joseph Auslander,*** whose new volume of verse, entitled *Cyclops' Eye*, is about to be published by Harper & Brothers.

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The contributors to the Lion's Mouth are ***Frederick L. Allen*** of the editorial staff of HARPER'S; ***Morris Bishop*** of Ithaca, New York, whose humorous sketches appear frequently in this and other magazines; and ***Katherine Dayton,*** a New York writer who makes this month her first appearance in our pages. In response to many requests, we are

glad to reveal the identity of the artist whose diminutive sketches appear each month at the head of the Lion's Mouth articles: he is *A. B. Walker,* whose illustrations are familiar to readers of *Life, Judge,* and other humorous periodicals.

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Last September we reproduced as the frontispiece of the Magazine ***Maurice Fromkes'*** painting, "Black and Gold," a portrait study of Claire Eames. This month we present "Candida," another painting by Mr. Fromkes, done during a recent trip to Spain.

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The discussion of "Living on the Ragged Edge," begun in our December issue, must be brought to a close, for other topics demand attention. But it is hard not to be able to make space for more of the replies (over a hundred in number) which we have received. We are thinking especially of one from a woman in her fifties who wishes that she had begun to save twenty years earlier instead of condemning herself by her extravagance to a life sentence on the ragged edge; of another from a newspaper editor who has saved over fifty thousand dollars out of a moderate salary by the simple expedient of dividing it into two parts *as it came in,* and setting one part aside as a sort of trust fund which he would under no circumstances touch for current expenses; and of many from other readers who have solved the problem of living happily, fully, and securely on small incomes. We reluctantly adjourn the discussion with an excerpt from a letter which comes to us from Montclair, New Jersey:

I should like to try to answer the question in the mind of the writer who tells of "Living on the Ragged Edge," because I feel that her problem is perhaps the most serious one in America to-day. It may be equally serious in other countries, but I hardly think so. America is the wealthiest nation in the world, and it has got into the habit of judging success in terms of money. There are many people who frankly believe and avow that the successful man is he who has achieved a big fortune. There is a much larger class who think they believe that money is not the mainspring of man's activity, and yet defer unconsciously to the possession of it. They protest, "Of course I don't think money is the most important thing. I like it and need it for what it will give me, but I realize that artists and musicians and poets and ministers sometimes make a larger contribution to civilization than mere money-getters." Yes, but in the minds of the majority, the most successful artists and musicians and poets and even ministers are those who have been able to turn their talents into money. Then I can think of about six people I know who fall into a third class, and honestly believe that money is not so important as other things; but they do not say much about it as a rule, for they know that most people will not believe them. Anyone who has given up a more lucrative job for a lesser, for reasons of personal preference, will remember the pitying or incredulous expressions on the faces of those to whom he was so rash as to tell of the affair.

I think the writer of "Living on the Ragged Edge" belongs in the second of these three groups. I feel sure that she and her husband would utterly repudiate any suggestion that they considered money the *sine qua non* of a happy life, and yet they apparently let their lives be bound by the tyranny of wealth, or lack of it. To put it baldly, their happiness is dependent upon their income. Undoubtedly if either of them thought that some very big and important thing, such as the life of a child, required an utter change from their present way of life, they would unhesitatingly change it. But, because happiness and peace of mind are the indefinite and intangible things they are, it seems difficult to adjust or make over their living scale to obtain them. . . .

The thing that makes life difficult for most of us, and especially for the more ambitious and sensitive ones, is that passion for perfection with which we are born. Little children have it. Each of us wants the best, and feels thwarted if he cannot have it. We want the best food for our tables, beautiful furnishings for our homes, becoming clothes for our bodies, the greatest advantages for our children, time and a chance to read the most interesting books and meet the most charming people, in short, opportunity for the perfecting of our lives on all sides. And yet none of us can have everything in equal perfection. And what about the perfections of the spirit? We have to weigh the desirability of this over that, and choose which we want. And if perchance we choose wrong occasionally, the choice is almost never final; it can always be reversed. The main thing is to know whither our choices are tending. The writer of "Living on the Ragged Edge" has summed up the situation for herself in the closing words which, she says, represent her feelings of hope for the future: "Next week it will be better. Next month I can earn more. Next summer we can spend less. Next year the firm will hit it big." Surely it would be wiser, surely more optimistic, and far, far more romantic to say, "Next week and next month and next year are too far away. To-day is ours, and to-day we are going to find out where we are really going, and what we are really aiming for; and having found out, we shall try to aim straight."

From one of many replies to "Is Big Business a Career?" we quote two paragraphs, wishing that we had space to publish the whole of the author's dissenting opinion.

The place for the young man, from college or school, who is looking for a good fight, is not in the white collar job of the office. Let him put on his brogues and flannels and step out to the firing line, where the best man wins and where he will learn to fight. Then, when he has earned the mahogany desk, which is as sure for him as for the clerk, and he reads a report of a good fight won or lost, there will be for him the appreciation of the hardships undergone, the romance of distant battle, and he will live over the things he reads in what to the clerk is a simple memorandum.

And where may one find these satisfying outlets for energy, these battles for supremacy over opposing forces, human or inanimate? Will one go to a small company where the problems are simple and few, or to the giant corporation whose arms reach out to many lands? The only answer is in the temperament of the individual. If he wants the quiet, small problems of the single plant and the goal of being, after a few years, the boss of a "small but growing company," well and good. Strange that to me that road leads to ease and certainty and perhaps smugness, with not so much to lose. But does he have a vision, as did the leaders of the last century, of an empire of those small factories working in unison, all to a single purpose? If so, let him go there and help to make them work in unison. He will find problems he never dreamed existed,—problems that the New York office doesn't know about. That is the life for a man with energy. Things may seem smooth in New York to the man who hasn't been at the front, but let him fight a fire in an oil refinery, or save a hundred tons of molten steel from breaking through a furnace wall, or clear a main line track of a railroad wreck, or ride out a hurricane in a southern sea, or land a million dollar contract, and he'll come to his job in the canyons of New York with a preparation that will make it a joy to read between the lines of every slip of paper to cross his desk.

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A footnote to Mr. Guedalla's "Portrait of a Red-Faced General" comes to us from Professor Johnson of the University of North Carolina:

EDITOR OF HARPER'S MAGAZINE:

"As he sat dreaming in the heat of 1805," Philip Guedalla writes in the December HARPER'S, "Cornwallis had forgotten Yorktown." Then he must have forgotten Guilford Courthouse earlier, for that was only one of the preliminary steps toward Yorktown. Yet one wishes that Mr. Guedalla might have included in that vigorous, brilliant "Portrait of a Red-Faced General" one more little detail. Guilford Courthouse has not forgotten Cornwallis. He said, "Take them as they come," and after 145 years Guilford Courthouse remembers that.

Greene's armed mob had lacked the stamina to withstand the charge of the Black Watch, whose line never faltered under a withering fire. The American first line was composed of the rawest of raw militia, recruited locally, for all the North Carolina Continentals had been lost with Lincoln at Charleston. The luckless militiamen were regarded by Greene as highly expendable troops, so they were thrown squarely in the path of the Highlanders and the Welsh Fusiliers. At the end of that March day in 1781 the field was in possession of the British and it was littered with farm boys from the country round about, boys who had never stood in battle before, but who had that day shot down the soldiers of the red-faced general in whose power they now lay. After dark it turned bitterly cold and began to rain. The hearts of the Quakers who inhabited the region were not with the armies; they were with the broken country boys out there on the ground in the freezing rain. What mercy could they expect from a red-faced general whose troops they had shot down?

Cornwallis' surgeons were overwhelmed. The night was dark, the terrain wooded. How, they inquired, were they to organize their searching parties so as to pick out their own men in the dark? Then the red-faced general said that they were not to try it, but that they were to treat all the wounded they could reach, regardless of the uniforms they wore. "Take them as they come," said Cornwallis.

The bloody mud disappeared from Guilford Courthouse almost a century and a half ago. The battlefield is beautiful, now that the earthworks have sunk into low green mounds, and marble and bronze mark the spots where huddled corpses were. On an eminence Greene sits his charger, permanent possessor of the field at last, and Fame in bronze bears a laurel wreath before him. To Cornwallis there is no memorial in metal or in stone, but Guilford Courthouse has not forgotten him. The Quakers still inhabit the country and they remember that he said, "Take them as they come."

A red-faced general who lost his campaign is entitled to small consideration, no doubt, but somehow Guilford Courthouse clings stubbornly to a curious respect for him as one who did honor to the king's uniform.

I wish Mr. Guedalla had known that.

GERALD W. JOHNSON